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By L. T. HOBHOUSE, D.Litt.

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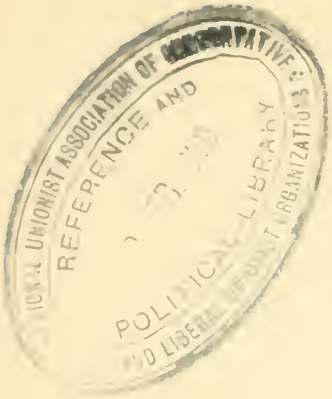

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QUESTIONS OF WAR AND PEACE

I

THE SOUL OF CIVILISATION

A Dialogue

Marryat is a man who, without being a pessimist, is subject to pessimistic moods. Some internal spring of scepticism breaks out within him from time to time and sends waves that submerge for a while all his most cherished beliefs, his beliefs in other men, in himself and in the eternal meaning of things. But the flood always recedes and the convictions emerge once more, unchanged, perhaps a little blurred

and ragged at the edges through the wear and tear, but not so much as to frustrate his fine literary and practical work. I was not surprised to find the floodgates open when I met him on the day on which the Coalition was announced.

"Let us make no mistake," he said, "it is the end of everything that you and I have cared about and worked for these twenty years. Oh, I know, a nation's life is long and there is time for many changes. But, I mean, it is the end so far as you and I are concerned. We are middle-aged men. We may live twenty or thirty years, but that will not be long enough to undo the mischief, to say nothing of any real social progress. So far as we are concerned *Actum est.* All the old problems will remain, and they will even get more acute. We have been unprofitable ser-

vants, and all our toil has been for nothing."

"Does the mere ending of the Liberal Ministry affect you so much?" I asked. "I know your faith in them has survived mine by some years; but after all, look back on their record for nearly ten years and ask what they have actually done for the social condition of the people. Old-age pensions I grant you, and the Wages Boards. But in the last six or seven years? Much talk, some experiments, one big measure of essentially Conservative social reform. One or two of them meant more, and meant it honestly, but they could get nothing done. The social forces were too strong for them."

"Well," he said, "I admit constant disappointment. I have always been living in anticipation, going on with them for

what they were just going to do, and always believing that the next obstacle would be the last. But that is not the main point. The vital thing is that militarism has won the day. I don't mean that we shall be beaten, but we shall win only by adopting German methods. It will be '*Græcia capta*' again, only the wrong way round. Beaten Germany will force her barbarous methods on the civilised victors. No; it is not a military defeat that I fear, but the break up of civilisation, the stifling of all the germs of a better social life that we could see quite well, though we knew that they were only germs. You go on talking about morals evolving and the rest of it. I don't want to be rude, but I cannot help laughing when I hear you. Don't you see that morals have come to an end, and that the

only thing the world believes in, and in fact the only thing real, is sheer force ? "

" I know you don't mean half you say," I replied, " so you may laugh as much as you like. But, after all, we always knew that such a war was one of the things to be reckoned with——"

" Such a war ! " he cried. " Do you mean that you, with your evolving ethics, wouldn't at any time have confidently maintained, on the basis of comparative sociology and psychology and ethnology, and at least five other elaborately-constructed sciences, that anything like the present war had become historically impossible ? What does all your jargon mean if it doesn't mean that the twentieth century differs from the seventeenth ? Yet here you have barbarity piled on barbarity, you have Alva and Tilly and all the rest

of them working with all the most refined resources of your beloved science. And to what end? Alva, at any rate, thought that he acted for the glory of God, but Hindenburg and von Kluck have no motive beyond the German State. That is their god, and that is the measure of your 'progress'—a meaner deity inspiring dirtier things."

Now, I am something given to pessimism myself, and am not cheered by the light-hearted confidence that is termed "patriotic." The daily optimism of the newspaper headlines dips me deep in the vortex of despair, and whenever I see smashing victories announced my soul forebodes disaster. Nor during the war have I found this contrariness lacking in justification. But when I meet a man more gloomy than myself some hidden spring of ultimate

belief is touched, and so it was on this occasion that I spake with my tongue.

"I know pretty well what you are feeling," I said, "and if we had been talking in this way six or eight months ago I should have agreed with you. But, do you know, the very things that appal you most have been the saving of the situation to me?"

"I thought you didn't love paradox," he said. "Personally I cannot extract much comfort from the Belgian Commissioners' report or the sinking of the *Lusitania*."

"It is no paradox," I replied. "It is simply the fact that the more Germany shows her real mind, the more I see that this war, far from being the deathblow to our civilisation, is the means of life, and may even be the beginning of a better life.

Let me explain. You would be the first to agree with me that when we are judging of the future what really matters is not externals—not even such big externals as victory or defeat—but something inward and vital, something that we call the soul, whether we are talking of a man or a state, or even an entire civilisation. We agree that if the soul is diseased there will be decay and death in the end, no matter what the external course of events may be, but if the soul is alive and healthy it will live down disaster and retrieve ruin. What we have to ask, then, is whether the war proves the soul of Western civilisation to be diseased and dying or alive and vigorous. By Western civilisation I mean what you would mean—the new ideas that budded out in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, ideas that centre, I

suppose, upon the sacredness of human personality and radiate out into all our familiar democratic and humanitarian conceptions—all very imperfect and experimental no doubt, but none the less charged with real and profound meaning. Now, militarism I would freely admit would be in the end the death of those ideas, and if we were given up to militarism I should say with you '*Actum est.*' But is that the case? Well, I freely admit that when the war first broke out I had my doubts. Of course, from the first Germany put herself hopelessly in the wrong by the attack on Belgium. But though Germany was wrong, I was not at all convinced that we were right. You and I know the kind of forces that were working up anti-German feeling, and for a moment what seemed to matter most was that those

had triumphed. There seemed in no country to be any solid fulcrum for a peace party, and, looking at the quarrel as a whole, might it not be said that, at any rate until the final act, all Europe shared the blame? Then began the Belgian resistance and the German 'frightfulness.' Well, you and I know something about charges of atrocity in war time, and were not disposed to be credulous. But the German general staff settled all doubts. Faced with a series of appalling charges, they referred everything to the military necessity of a frightful example—and this in the first days of war and in a country with which they had no quarrel, and where they themselves knew they had no right to be. This was only the first of the long series of acts now familiar to all the world which showed the mind

of Germany to be something quite other than most of us had known or even conceived as possible—something—and this is the point—which the world cannot live with, something which, if it cannot be extirpated, will extirpate civilisation. Well then that, to begin with, is to me the justification and necessity of the war. No doubt our people made their mistakes. Those of us who criticised Grey's diplomacy in the pre-war days are by no means bound to withdraw everything that we said. But we are bound to realise that Grey was, perhaps inarticulately, aware of the kind of being that he was up against in his dealings with German statesmanship. We did not know it in the same way, and to that extent we misjudged him. As to one or two of our friends who continue to harp on this or that phrase

in a dispatch which might have been more pacific, they might as well excuse a murderer on the ground that his victim laughed at the wrong moment. How anyone who opposes militarism can excuse Germany, how people who call themselves friends of liberty and champions of the rights of small states can palliate the attack on Belgium passes my comprehension."

"There I am with you," he said, "but I don't begin to see the drift of your argument. The German abominations merely prove my thesis, that modern civilisation was never anything but skin-deep, and we have now got beneath the skin."

"My point," I replied, "is to distinguish between German 'Kultur' and Western civilisation. It would be unfair to say that German thinkers never accepted or understood the ideas of which we were

speaking just now. Kant was a great humanitarian, and looked forward to universal peace. But after the French Revolution, in particular after Jena, Germany reacted strongly against the whole liberalising humanitarian principle. Good philosophic idealists among ourselves go about trying to prove that the reaction in Germany is modern, and represents a sad falling-off from the idealism of Hegel. But the truth is that Hegel is the father and by long odds the most serious champion of everything reactionary in the nineteenth century. The deification of the State and the belief that it is the supreme type of human organisation, the contempt for democracy, the unreal identification of liberty with law which simply put every personal right at the mercy of the legislator, the upholding of war as a necessity, the

disregard of humanity, the denial of the sanctity of treaties and of international law can all be traced to the *Philosophie des Rechts*. I have no doubt that they go further back, and I suppose that the idealistic nationalism of Fichte was in some sort the medium between the humanitarianism of Kant and this idealism turned inside out of the Hegelian school. But however that may be, you find all the essentials of a brutal, autocratic, militant, unscrupulous nationalism tricked out with the finest phrases in the Hegelian philosophy. This is no exceptional peculiarity of one system. Follow German thought down through the century, and you will only find more and more insistence on force, power, ascendancy, and more and more repudiation of any binding law or any general sense of the unity of mankind.

You find these things equally in Treitschke who exalts, and in Nietzsche who despises, the State. As to counter currents, Liberalism died in Germany after 1848, and social democracy was all along materialistic in basis and revolutionary in method, so that its influence on the directing forces was negligible, and might even be negative. Therefore I say Germany was the chosen home of the reaction against the Western ideal, and now we see for ourselves what this reaction meant."

"I dare say that is true," Marryat put in; "but, all the same, you academic people immensely exaggerate the influence of theories. You go about lecturing, and because people listen politely you imagine that you convince them. The truth is that they never accept a philosophical theory unless they want to do so for their

own purposes, and then they may find its phrases convenient to them."

"Even if that were true," I said, "it would show that German philosophy was a good index to the popular trend of German thought and feeling. But we all know that in Germany the professors have had far more influence than elsewhere, and it is the most damaging thing that can be said about professors as a class. It isn't only the regular philosophers. Take any German work on history, ethnology, and the like. Notice the way in which they deal with the ethical and human issues. You remember your Mommsen, his Cæsar worship, his contempt for the elements of republican idealism, because the current of events moved otherwise. You remember his remark on the suicide of Cato—the farce of the Republic was

played out and the fool spoke the epilogue ? But Mommsen, at any rate, is human enough to be a partisan. In the more typical case you will find the German academic treatment of ethical and human issues merely bloodless in its impartiality. The quality has its advantages, and the English or French writer who gets excited about these points is apt to take sides, to palliate or to condemn, and very often to moralise. But, at any rate, these defects proceed from a real interest in the heart of human and social phenomena, which the Germans so frequently miss. How many tomes, for example, have they given us on Greek choruses, and what are all these worth—I don't say in themselves, but as means to understanding Greek tragedies—compared with one Chorus in Gilbert Murray's Hippolytus ? Or, to take

quite a different case, contrast the extreme wealth of human interest in James's Psychology, for instance, with the arid wastes that stretch across Wundt's portentous volumes. There is just as much science in the American, and beyond and below it there is the real thing, the human soul, of which Wundt seems to know about as much as an intelligent child. The quite abnormal lack of humour, which no one denies, is merely one symptom of the blankness of the German academic tradition on one side."

"Well," said Marryat, "this may be very true, but I still do not see your drift. Admit that German professors are not as a rule humorists and that Wundt's *Völkerpsychologie* is five times too long. What has that to do with the war and the future of civilisation?"

"If the German professors had some humour," I replied, "they would not have issued so absurd a manifesto on the war, for you will grant that humour involves some power of seeing the other man's point of view. But what I was coming to is this. Germany stood out from the new civilisation of the West. She reacted against all the ideals that sprang up in France, England, America, and countries in sympathy with them. She did not return to barbarism. She developed a new variant in civilisation—in point of fact a new religion. This religion had a god—one being in two incarnations. One incarnation was called Energy or Power, or perhaps Will. The other was called the State—the State conceived really in terms of a War Lord and a general staff driving the organised Power of a people to

victory. Militarism, therefore, is the link between the two incarnations of this novel German deity, and you can understand why Nietzsche and Treitschke—in many respects worlds asunder—both contribute to the cult. Germany is not materialistic or irreligious as people say. She has a faith, and an infernal faith it is, too—'the vilest birth of time' Shelley might legitimately have called it. Now I, for one, never understood this till the war began. But if you will saturate yourself for some months with the writers I have been naming, reading their theories day by day to the refrain of the war news, you will be less sceptical about the relations between the academic and the practical, and you will also understand me when I say that the course of the war has made me feel that there is here not the break-

up of a civilisation, but the clash of two civilisations with two religions—the one whose god is Force, and the other whose god is that which I shall not be able to describe in any terms on which we two would agree, but, at any rate (this we shall both accept), a God whose service is perfect Freedom. Between these religions there was bound to come a decision. If we had been more faithful servants, perhaps, we might have conquered by moral means. If the Western nations had shown the world the example of a life embodying in the arts of peace that same Perfect Freedom of which we speak, they would have converted the world. (They would certainly have convinced some German professor, who would have returned home and proved to his countrymen by statistics that their gods were false.) But, as we

took for granted at the outset, the ideal of Freedom is realised only in germ. It is still struggling for existence, even in the lands to which it peculiarly belongs. But if Germany had overthrown France and Belgium last year it would have been destroyed for good and all in Europe. As it is, the war has quickened it into new life and a much fuller consciousness.

"So now perhaps you see what I mean. At the beginning I feared that we had blundered into a war devoid of historic necessity through surrender to the militaristic elements among ourselves. As events came crowding on, I, for one, saw—and I am sure that countless others had much the same experience—that the struggle was quite different from anything I supposed, that essentially it was not a fight between one country and another,

but a struggle for the elements of a free and human civilisation as we understand the terms. In such a struggle many things may go under, but as long as we fight in this spirit we shall save our souls alive."

"And yet, as the result, we ourselves may become a militarist nation, with conscription, Tariff Reform, and all the accustomed paraphernalia."

"It may be so. There is always danger after a war of the reactionary parties coming to the top. As to this, I should only like to say in passing that Burt, the economist, who insisted on enlisting as a private, and has pretty good means, therefore, of sampling the temper of the men in his battalion, tells me that while they are perfectly resolute about the task before them, they are equally resolved that there shall be no more wars or military service

if they can help it. James—an ex-Pacifist like myself—tells me the same thing of the French soldiers, of whom he has seen a good deal. But let us grant the possibility that out of the confusion of parties may come political wreckage. Unfortunate, of course. Still, I claim your admission that if we have saved our souls alive we shall in the end sweep away political reaction and reconstruct the movement of liberation. People will have come to feel much more genuinely about many things—nationality, for example, and public right—than ever they did in the past. I can conceive a new Holy Alliance coming about, which should not be anti-democratic, but should be more like Mazzini's dream. That, however, is as it may be. All I contend is that the vital element is safe. There had grown up in Europe a

giant Power, which, with all the science and material culture of the West, rejected its newer ideals and lived by a light of its own. Had we been infinitely wiser and better than we are we might have wrestled with it successfully on a higher plane. But Germany brought the question suddenly to an issue of life and death. It is a calamity, but a calamity that has befallen us from without, not the corruption from within of which nations perish. The loss of young life is overwhelming, and the destruction of so many of its best must impoverish Europe for thirty years. The surplus of wealth that we needed for social reorganisation is mopped up. Political parties are in confusion, and it may quite well be that reactionary principles will gain a temporary ascendant. But under all this the essential truth remains. Civili-

sation—our free Western civilisation—has saved its soul, and shall live."

"Well," he said, "I will not argue the point. I see what you mean, and am only too desirous to believe. But if the soul is saved she will have some strange transformations of the body politic to effect before she comes to her own."

"That is true," I conceded; "and that fragment of the nation's soul called Marryat will play no mean part in the work."*

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II

THE HOPE OF THE WORLD

A Dialogue

It was New Year's Eve and we were not a merry party. A gale raged outside. At any other time the fireside would have been cosy and comfortable by contrast, but now we thought of the men in the trenches and chid ourselves for enjoying our ease while they toiled and suffered. Few of us but had some personal loss to look back upon as we reckoned up the year, or some personal anxiety for the coming twelvemonths. The loss of a great ship with 300 lives put the finishing touch to the tale of public disaster.

At such a time we were not particularly cheered by the appearance of Loder coming into the room as though he were a blast from the south-westerly gale detached with the special mission of sweeping all despondency away. Loder is one of those hyper-cheerful souls for whom nothing that is is wrong and everything that is going to be is better. A world cannot be much awry which has recognised Loder's merit and brought him prosperity, and the worst fault that he will admit in the scheme of things is that it makes no provision for an omelette which does not involve the breaking of eggs. Loder knows more of strategy than Joffre and Hindenburg combined, and his optimism sees in every movement either victory to-day or a double victory to-morrow. An advance to him is an advance and naught beside, but a

retreat is always a masterly strategical movement on the road to a completer success. If the Germans take a position it is a failure relatively to the enormous expenditure of men over a wide front. If the Allies take one, no question of expenditure is allowed. Naturally on this occasion Loder thought it his duty to revive our drooping spirits. A better New Year? Nonsense! What better could we desire? Germany was rapidly wearing herself out. She had lost 3,000,000 men —permanently lost. The German official list only 2,500,000 gross casualties? Very likely—but who would trust a German official list? And as Loder developed the argument half millions and millions began to fly. Whole armies were annihilated, populations dwindled, and mere hundreds of thousands ceased to count. Loder's

arithmetic was in full spate when Priscilla's cool incisive voice broke in: "All this," she said, "is to me a capital illustration of the real meaning of war. You would shudder at the sight of one man slain or mutilated, but in masses they are all so many figures to you. You gloat over the millions of dead, of men maimed for life, legless, armless, blinded—fancy being blind at twenty and otherwise strong with fifty years of darkness before you. No, you will not fancy it, you refuse. You shut your mind to the individual and you count in thousands and millions, forgetting that each one of the millions is a human being, suffering flesh and blood, the son of a weeping mother, husband of some patient woman who can only wait and wonder what fresh evils the rulers of the world will inflict on her.

War makes you men all alike. You care for nothing when physical victory is at stake. You will drench the world in blood for your pride, and when it is all over as likely as not you will cheerfully admit it was all a mistake and that you were putting your money on the wrong horse ! ”

Priscilla, it must be owned, is no admirer of the masculine intellect. An exceedingly competent manager herself she finds a use for the male animal when she wants a nail driven in or a screw taken out, but in the higher things she has no use for them, and she derives a certain melancholy satisfaction from the breakdown of the male conduct of affairs to which the war is witness. Her intervention checked Loder in full career, and a check to Loder is apt to be a temporary

upset, requiring an interval for the re-arrangement of his faculties. Mrs. Bourne took up the defence. Her boy had just gone back to Flanders, and she might be excused for some vehemence. "Mr. Loder was speaking of Germans, Priscilla," she said. "I am sure neither he nor any of us are regardless of all these dreadful sufferings, and when I think of Rufus knee deep in the mud—but at any rate I sent him out with six pairs of really well-knitted socks, for if you had seen the holes—but what I mean is that I am sure Mr. Loder feels it as much as we all do, and if there are so few Germans left then the war will be over all the sooner, and the suffering so much the less."

Priscilla was patience itself, but could not restrain a slight inflection of sarcasm

when she said : " But you see, Mrs. Bourne, the German mothers are feeling and saying just the same things. They——"

" German mothers," broke in Mrs. Bourne. " But why did they let the men do it ? Why did they bring this horrible war upon us ? "

" You see," said Priscilla, " they were afraid, and when men are afraid their way is to hit out and try to get their blow in first. The Germans had a good deal to be afraid of ; they were afraid of Russia who mobilised her huge army on their frontier, and of France who wanted to take back Alsace-Lorraine, and of England who was jealous of their commerce and wanted to destroy their fleet. What they did not understand was that Russia and France and England were all equally afraid of them, so when they saw Russia

massing her troops they did not dare to wait, but struck the first blow."

"At little Belgium," put in Bourne, coming to his wife's rescue, with more courage than discretion.

"I have noticed," remarked Priscilla, "that when men wish to screen selfishness behind sentimentality they have a habit of using the adjective 'little.' Give them something little and they begin to cuddle and cosset it until it never escapes. I don't know how far the Belgians were deceived into thinking that we should protect them, or how far they rushed on their fate open-eyed, but in any event they served us as a most convenient pretext. As to neutrality, how can a country be neutral which is blocking the way? You don't leave much neutrality to the unfortunate Greeks. And as to treaties,

when do men hold to any engagements unless there is someone to hold them ? "

" But in this case," I ventured, " there was someone who sought to hold them, and might it not be rather a good thing if one great Power once in history should have staked itself on the maintenance of the treaty right of a small nation ? "

" We had a perfect right," she replied, " to use moral influence. We should have shown the Germans that we disapproved of the attack and the Belgians that they were equally wrong to resist. As it is they have drawn the sword and perished by the sword."

" Then," said Bourne, " there is no distinction between attacking and resisting ? Killing deliberately and killing in self-defence ? Clean warfare and frightfulness ? "

"Who can ever tell," she retorted, "which is attack and which is defence? The Germans, as I have said, were afraid of France and Russia and wanted to defend themselves. Belgium got in their way and refused to listen though they promised faithfully to treat them as friends, pay for anything they took, and give them back their country afterwards. As to what you call frightfulness, you men believe every story against the Germans just as they believe every story against us. Both are feeding on hate and, like all men in wartime, believe everything that is evil."

"But," remarked Bourne, "you said just now that men did not keep their promises unless someone held them to them. I rather sympathise with the little American boy, who spoilt Dernburg's

rehearsal of the German promises by asking him how the Belgians were to know that the Germans would keep their promises."

"You forget," she said, "that there is such a thing as public opinion. The Germans are a highly-civilised people, and if you would only trust to the real forces that make for harmony and fair dealing in the world, you would rely on them to see justice done. What could they really do in Belgium, or in England for that matter, if we chose not to resist them? If there were no one to fight them, how could they kill anyone? Civilised people do not make slaves or interfere with one another's religions. The old motives for warfare are gone and only fear remains. If we had set the example of being unafraid, we should not only have been perfectly secure ourselves but might, by our

example, have saved Europe. But the truth is that we wanted to have it out with Germany. Some wanted to destroy her trade and others were pining to show that our men were as good as hers. The quarrel with Russia was the opportunity and Belgium the pretext."

It was apparent that for us Priscilla admitted a motive quite other than fear, but I hesitated to point out the inconsistency. The atmosphere was getting too sultry. Bourne and Loder were both at boiling-point. The truth is that Priscilla's virtues are a little too manifest, and apt to produce in the less regenerate, sudden and tempestuous explosions of the old Adam. But deliverance came from an unexpected quarter. A calm but deep and strong voice broke in as Priscilla paused for breath.

"Thy zeal is not always according to knowledge, Priscilla Mary," said old Mrs. Swainson. "Thee would'st have men keep the peace and that is well, but to dispose their hearts aright, thee must be just to thy friends as well as to thy enemies. The Word is clear, that men should not slay, not even in a just cause, but thee knowest, as I do, that the nations have never listened to the Word and have sought to build up customs and laws to prevent strife and lessen its inhumanity. These customs and laws are not Christian for they admit warfare to be possible, yet are they not without effect. Such as they are they have built up civilisation, and he who offends against them is doubly wrong, while he who abides by them is doing justly according to his lights, which are not ours. Now, you all know I am

a neutral, and I was not brought up in my country to love England more than other nations. I have passed years in Germany and have many good friends there, so when the war broke out I was doubly grieved and I concerned myself to study the matter and discern the motives of men. I knew there were many in England who wanted war, and I read articles in some of your leading papers in that fatal week which clamoured for bloodshed, so that at first I thought it was but the old story of the Jingoes, as you used to call them here, in all nations alike forcing war upon the peaceable folk. But as the whole story came out bit by bit I had to see that this was not just. I saw that Germany alone had made herself ready, that even Austria would have drawn back at the last had Germany

allowed, and that Germany herself might not have fought if her generals had left the question to her statesmen. I daresay the generals acted according to their lights, but all they could see was that it was the mission of Germany to become supreme in Europe and that the way thereto was to strike first and to use terror, not even sparing women and children. Now, these were offences not only against the perfect rule but against the very imperfect laws of men, and there is no gain in denying it. Nor wilt thou make men peaceably inclined nor dispose them to gentler ways by denying them to be right according to their own lights when the fact is so. Rather grant them all the justice they claim and then try to show them the more excellent way."

Mrs. Swainson's words produced a re-

markable calm. She was too old and authoritative for Priscilla to answer back according to her wont, and, moreover, this flank attack really shattered her formations, a thing which so pleased us all that for the moment we were disposed, for the first time for many months, to pacifism. Bourne was the first to shake off the spell.

"I think everyone respects your attitude, Mrs. Swainson," he said, "and we can see that it would be a much better world if everyone believed as you do. But the trouble is that yours is a principle which must be accepted by all or none. Logically it is anarchism. If all the good men refuse to employ force under all circumstances, they stand at the mercy of any unscrupulous person, and just the same applies to nations. The war itself

has shown that the unarmed or half-armed countries like Belgium are at the mercy of any unscrupulous aggressor. You grant that a peaceful civilisation, however imperfect, is worth something. How would you preserve it on your principles ? "

" I might ask you, Mr. Bourne," said the old lady, " whether you are sure of preserving it on yours. Are you not sinking into the slough of militarism more deeply month by month ? But that would be to answer you according to your own lights, which are imperfect. What I am concerned to say is rather that the Word is clear to me and I must abide by it without fear of consequences. ' Thou shalt not kill ' is a clear command. I must obey, and believe that obedience will be in the end for the best, though I cannot

tell how. Yet even as to consequences we have some light. There are spiritual forces in the lives of men which are enlarged where men do right and contracted where they hide the light that is within them. If but one whole nation were so given over to peace that it would not depart from its ways, not even in the greatest stress of temptation, it would liberate, as the scientific men say, such an amount of energy—only it would be spiritual energy—as would subdue the world. It is true—the meek shall inherit the earth, not heaven only but this world as well."

"But again," said he, "there comes the difficulty. Men are not made so. Here and there a man or perhaps more often a woman, genuinely brave and fearless, will yet endure everything rather

than strike, and passive resistance by a single person is both finer and more effective than violence. But you could not, for example, in this crisis go among the armed nations, which have all been self-seeking, and in one way or another inimical to peace, and expect to convert one of them suddenly and wholesale to your principle. Nor would any of the others believe in the conversion. It would be put down to weakness, and the moral and spiritual forces of which you speak would be dissipated in an atmosphere of denial and ridicule."

"That is true according to the wisdom of the world," she replied. "None the less those who have the light, be they few or many, must follow where it leads. You would agree that there are things that you would not do, however great

the disasters they might seem to avert. It is so with us. We must not kill or take part in killing, be the consequences what they may. I have tried to show you how the consequences might be other than you think, but it is not given to me to be certain on that point. I only know what I must do and must not do, just like one of your soldiers under your own military law."

"But," said Pentire, "for many of us this is just the tragedy of the situation. Your rule may save the individual but it cannot save humanity. I mean that the individual who holds as you do may keep his conscience pure if he is prepared to face the supreme consequence, but he cannot save the world, which after all is organised into great States, governed by average men who know of

no such law. If you want peace, not merely as an ideal to be talked of, or perhaps as a law to be followed by conscientious individuals, but as a real state that is to be achieved by mankind, you must work through institutions and government and all the humdrum makeshifts and contrivances of statesmen. Now, fifty years ago it was thought by many that through these means the world was actually approaching a reign of peace, and all serious thinkers agreed that in this lay the great hope for humanity. It is not merely our temporary happiness, not merely the life of a generation that has been destroyed, but this larger hope which has received a shattering blow. If the war had been a sudden calamity, an explosion of unseen forces, it would have been bad enough. The actual suffering

and loss would have been the same. But in relation to the history of humanity, it is even worse, it is the last product of a chain of causes which have undermined the civilisation that the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were building up. It is the logical culmination of disruptive tendencies which have been at work for generations, and which we must take as rooted deeply in the entire political structure of Europe and even, I am afraid, in human nature. It is not to be ascribed to a double dose of original sin in the Teutonic race. I quite grant you, Bourne, that Germany is primarily responsible both for the outbreak of the war and for the relapse into barbarism which its methods involve. I grant you that at the moment we could not have stood out, and that if we had done so Europe would have been

crushed, and would in effect have become a German dependency. But Europe can be saved from German militarism only by Russian, French, and now British militarism. There seems to be no third course. Submission to a central military power, or a system of armed States watching each other with the utmost jealousy and upholding a precarious balance with the certainty that whenever it topples this way or that there will be another catastrophe. Between these alternatives lies the future of the continent, a future in which we are now definitely involved. In such a future what chance is there for internal liberty or for humanitarian progress ? "

" But," I said, " will not much depend on the military event ? If we win, German militarism will be discredited in its

own home. The German people will exact a reckoning; and among ourselves the German idea of the State, which is the guiding conception of all our reactionary movements, will go out of fashion."

"Doesn't it look like it!" was the ironical retort. "Our ruling classes, who long ago discovered that the German State organisation was the only sound method of baffling democracy, have now persuaded the democracy itself that it is the only method of beating Germany. Consider the steps. First the Press is brought under control. The Government becomes the sole source of trustworthy information. The primary object of course is to prevent information reaching Germany, and so far as all military matters are concerned that is of course a legitimate consequence of a state of war. But the effect is to

withhold from the public all means of checking the Government by criticism, and the principle is extended to domestic affairs, so that it becomes an offence to publish a report of a meeting that is hostile to a Minister. Then comes the coercion of the Trade Unions, and this takes a very characteristic form. Works of public importance are not nationalised, but the men working in them are brought under discipline. The employer class is treated as a branch of the State organisation, and is given powers over the workers in the name of the common necessity. Do you suppose these powers will be readily relinquished after the war? Then comes conscription. Then comes, already looming as a sequel to the war of arms, the war of trade, with some form of Protection as its consequence. Now, all these things

form a coherent whole. They are the elements of German statecraft. Taken together they build up the ideal of the self-contained, bureaucratic military State. It is quite an intelligible ideal and to a point a good one. For good as for evil it is the reverse of the *laissez faire* principle of the old Liberalism. It will not leave the weakest to go to the wall. It will make provision for the elements of physical efficiency for every man. It proposes a complete organisation of society proceeding from above in which the powerful classes are constituted the working allies of the Government, while the weaker are protected as well as disciplined. All the resources of the nation, its people, its material wealth, its industry, are organised in subservience to the supreme end of increasing the power of the State as a

self-contained entity. The State is, in Hegel's expression, the ultimate end. This is the idea on which Germany has worked, and whatever its effect on the soul, it makes so effective a fighting machine that it can only be met by the creation of a similar machine. The Democracies may win, but democracy is beaten."

"You are governed too much," I replied, "by the incidents of the war. We were bound to organise ourselves, and I quite grant that the Germanisers among us have made the most of their opportunity. But it does not follow that they will hold their gains when the war is over. On the contrary, there will be a reaction, and we shall be able to say that the very fact that democracy proved capable of organising itself effectively and spontaneously in a crisis is proof of the possibility

of combining free government with efficiency—a possibility which has always been the doubtful point in the philosophy of liberty."

"I should be more inclined to believe in your reaction," he said, "if the Germanising tendency had begun with the war, but it is of much older date. It has dominated the academic world in this country for two generations. Through the influence of Balliol it inspired the Imperial group which paralysed the Liberal party in the 'nineties, and has now extruded the older tradition from the party life. It guided the Tariff Reform movement at the beginning of the century, and finally it captured the so-called Liberal Government in 1911. It was not without reason that a Labour member in the conscription debate argued that if the

State may compel a man to insure, it may compel him to serve. Both forms of compulsion are integral parts of the German idea. Now comes the war, and it is the very opportunity that the Germanisers have longed for. Conscription was the worst fence in the run, and they have persuaded the nation to take it blindly. After this it is an easy canter home—plain going all the way. But further than this, the reaction is not merely political. It does not depend on a change in the balance of parties, nor even in new ideas about political machinery. It is the outcome of a slow but decisive moral revolution. The Liberal State was not merely a political institution or a political ideal. It rested upon an ethical basis, and this ethical basis was humanitarianism. More or less consciously and clearly

it conceived a future of peaceful co-operation in science, in art, in philosophy, as well as in industry and in government. It held that the world had passed beyond the military and entered on the industrial phase, and by industrialism it understood the whole sum of energies in which mankind can co-operate, not perhaps without emulation and rivalry, but without any final internecine struggle. Thus it conceived the future of the world to be one of peace, and in a world of peace the functions of government are diminished in one of their oldest and most important aspects. That is why it could rely so wholeheartedly upon the free individual, could dispense with ideas of territorial aggression, could regard armaments as an apparatus maintained by inertia from an older régime destined gradually to

become superfluous; could look forward to the extension of women's influence in public life, and could imagine that the nationalism, which on all sides was really threatening its structure, would nevertheless be tamed and softened by liberty itself and that the peoples struggling to be free would cease from violence when they attained justice. Now, humanitarianism conceived itself to be the culmination of all previous ethical and religious developments. It was Comte who, all eccentricities apart, gave it the best general definition. Humanity, all that is distinctive in the human soul, is itself the real object of effort and of worship, of worship for that which it has attained, seeing that it is only in the great and good men that we come into contact through actual experience with the spiritual; and of

effort in the sense that the development of what is great and good in man, the wider extension and the deeper harmonisation of human life, is itself the supreme end which gives meaning and value to all the older religions. The theological religions were good in so far as they incorporated elements of the idea of humanity and crystallised them in a hero, a saint, an apostle or a god. But the truth was that it was these elements themselves, or rather the spiritual order which comprehends and makes a synthesis of them all, which is the essential of religion, and to comprehend this order and work it out in human life from the widest social relations to the humblest personal intercourse was the true religion which the world had at length come to understand. All previous history might be regarded

as an ascent to this point of view, and future history would be the descent, the more rapid and continuous process of distributing the fertilising waters over the plain from the head among the hilltops, up to which they had been raised by the exhausting labour of countless generations.

"Now this conception of humanity has broken in our hands. The ideal has shown itself either too high or too abstract and rarefied for the actual human being. It has fallen an easy prey to counter influences, first to the biological conception of the struggle for existence and the survival of the fittest, and then to the German State conception of the necessary rivalry of organised communities. The world has been falling away from it for two generations, and the great war is the signal for its complete breakdown. Far from being

the goal of a grand historic tendency, we ought, looking back over the centuries, on Comte's own method of judging by the prevailing line or trend of development, to regard humanitarianism as merely the product of certain local and temporary forces emerging in France towards the middle of the eighteenth century, culminating in the Revolution, and enjoying a St. Martin's summer in the period of peace and middle-class Liberalism which followed upon the close of the Revolutionary wars. The moment the forces of revolution and combativeness began to organise themselves again in the new States, the humanitarian ideal was shattered beyond the possibility of repair. That is the position, from which I see no outlet. Humanitarian religion, confronted with the facts, has proved as delusive as every

other. Ethically its ideal is just, and to my mind the only ideal on which a consistent ethical doctrine can be based. But as a working force in human life it is even more impotent than Christianity. It is up against the facts of human nature and they are too hard for it. Such is the outlook—at least as I see it—and you will grant that, for the humanitarian, it is sufficiently dark."

"Your admissions," said Moore, "are very interesting, but if you will let your candour carry you a little further, I think you may escape the sheer pessimism in which you have ended. You want a religion, according to your own theory, to be based upon the ultimate facts of human nature—at least that is what I suppose a Positive religion to be—and so far I quite agree with you. But where I have always

differed until to-day is in this: that you have seemed to me to refuse to look at the facts. What is man? He is not the co-operative animal, peaceful and industrious and, to say the truth, rather namby-pamby, that you conceive. He is industrious and he is social, and he has a respect for justice and for order and for all the softer and more tender side of life; but besides being an industrious animal he is also a fighting animal. Besides being co-operative he is competitive, and his social life always has been and always will be the life of a group organised for order and co-operation within, so that it may be the more efficient in holding its own against rivals. Take away from him this sense of rivalry, destroy the fighting instincts, and you cut the nerve which braces human energy and indeed holds

social life together. Your one-sided humanitarianism is sheer effeminacy, just as your one-sided industrialism is purely material. If you doubt me, look at the facts of the industrial order as you would yourself describe them if you were pleading for some social reform. Look at the grey, monotonous life of the mass of the workers, a life becoming ever more grey and more monotonous as the sub-division of labour advances and the gulf between employer and employed widens. Look, on the other hand, at the vulgarism of the successful classes, the absorption in pleasures, which may be harmless, but are petty and unworthy, of five-sixths of that enormous surplus which this monotonous industry is for ever piling up. Can you imagine any ideal capable of sustaining enthusiasm along these lines?

Of course you were always going to reform it. There was to come about some social revolution, which would abolish the contrasts of rich and poor, and somehow diffuse the fruits of industry more equably and with more regard to the sum of human happiness. But, in the first place, this ideal was like the horizon. It always receded with every advance that you made towards it. And, in the second place, no one has ever succeeded even in formulating it in such a way as to preserve any of the elements of romance, beauty and real dignity in human life. It was an ideal limited by the eight hour, or the seven hour, or, if you like, the six hour day, with plenty of picture palaces and football matches to beguile the increased leisure. Your ideal has perished because it did not answer to the true needs of man,

who, if he wants repose and love with one side of his nature, demands it only as a foil to the strenuous endeavour, self-sacrifice and hardship which the rest of his nature craves. Your religion failed for lack of the element of asceticism. It left out a whole set of human instincts. Now, I have a notion that in the organism of a State there is just this synthesis that you lack. The State of the future will be much more social even than anything of which you have dreamed. It will be a complete, self-contained organisation, not based upon illusory theories of human equality but, in a genuine scientific spirit, on the facts of human nature, which clearly indicate that it is for some to lead and for others to follow and serve. But the servants of this State will be far better cared for than the equal citizens of a

nebulous humanitarianism. They will be protected from oppression by individuals. They will have their functions duly assigned to them, and will reap the reward which is the hire of which the labourer is worthy. It will be a reward always sufficient for physical efficiency—for the first object of the State, even as a fighting organisation, is to secure the maximum of physical efficiency in the maximum number of its citizens. And from the highest to the lowest, every man in such a State will feel himself, not as a matter of academic formulæ but in a living and genuine sense, the servant of the community, just as he will feel that the community is the just and considerate master who cares for him, protects him, educates him, and caters for his needs. This sense he obtains from his knowledge that he may

at any time be called to fight for his community, to sacrifice everything, life itself if he is of military age, wealth, convenience, comfort, and the lives of his sons if he is above military age. You may talk as you will of public spirit and sacrifice to the common good, but it is only in war that the sacrifice becomes genuine and conscious. These millions of young men who have volunteered among ourselves are having the time of their lives. Hundreds and thousands of them are better fed, better clothed, and physically more fit than they could hope ever to be in your peaceful organisation of industry. War has done for them even materially what peace could not do. But it is on the moral side that the real gain is to be seen. For the first time, the young man to whom life presented no alternative

between daily drudgery and insipid pleasure, feels himself at once a man and a citizen, a man doing man's work, a citizen serving a glorious cause for a social end. All that your social ethics talks about is here realised at a stroke. There is a moral uplift which means infinitely more to humanity than all humanitarianism. There is an actual sacrifice of material goods, of riches, of comfort, of life and limb such as the older religions might preach but which they left only to the select few to practise; and here at a stroke you have all the populations of the greatest nations of the world ready to give up their all cheerfully at the call of the public need. War of course has its cruel side. In populations so dense as those of the modern world, and with the weapons now at our disposal, it must

inflict suffering on a tremendous scale, and for that reason it must become rare. But the war spirit can be retained within the intervals of peace. It can and will still brace men to their duty, animating the individual, with a readiness, persistent and active, though it may not have to be called upon for the final display, to sacrifice his all, and maintaining as a sheer necessity the discipline and the unity which makes the sum of a healthy social order."

"And what," I asked, "is the outcome of all this. You conceive that each State is to strive unceasingly for the mastery, do you not?"

"Undoubtedly," he answered, "a powerful nation may rightly struggle for mastery just as the subject nation may rightly struggle to be free."

"But," I said, "supposing that one State achieved the mastery over all others. Would it be right to aim at that?"

"Undoubtedly," he replied, "provided the State was sufficiently powerful. If it slackened its activities, it would at once begin to go back."

"But," I asked, "if it was sufficiently successful, would it not subdue the remainder and so put an end to warfare?"

"Fortunately," he said, "I do not think that it is possible as the world is actually organised. If it were, the result would be a Roman peace, wherein there would be no outer barbarians to save the world from final corruption. But of course, the State must always fight to the top of its power."

"Then," I said, "according to you, it is the business of every powerful State

to strive for an end which it can only attain at the cost of losing all that makes its life worth having ? "

" Well," he replied, " that is to apply rationalistic ideas to human life. The truth is that you cannot judge human character or conduct by rational tests. The interests of life, as everybody knows, lie in process and not in achievement."

" Then," I said, " the aim of a war is not victory but fighting ? "

" Ultimately," he said, " I suppose that is so, but one has to have the ideal of victory before one or the process itself cannot be maintained. There is no doubt an element of illusion, but it is no greater than the illusion of the lover, and infinitely more noble than the illusion of the man who seeks riches. Who cares for winning anything, whether it be a wife

or wealth or a race when they are once attained? It is in the actual strife that one puts forth effort, and the putting forth of the effort is its own justification."

"It seems to me," I said, "that your successful State would reach a point at which it would have to guard against its own victories. It would have to keep minor States as a kind of preserved big game for it to hunt from time to time for fear its energies should rust. That is an interesting notion which has occurred to me now and again when I have been turning over the pages of Treitschke. Of course he never says it in so many words, but I confess it has struck me that the German glorification of militarism has always rested on the tacit assumption that in every war that was coming Germany was going to win. But I should like to

know your view in its application to the present struggle."

"That is simplicity itself," he said. "We are out to crush Germany."

"But finally?" I asked.

"Finally without doubt," he said. "An inconclusive peace is the one real danger upon the horizon."

"But if Germany is finally crushed, we shall never fight her again, and here would be one of your opportunities of war vanishing."

"Well," he said, "you referred to Treitschke, and I will quote him: 'God will see to it that this dreadful medicine never fails humanity.'"

"Still, to future wars, as to the present, my logic will apply."

"Oh, well, if you come to logic," he said, "you go outside the facts of human

nature and take refuge in ideals, of which Pentire has already shown you the futility."

"Still," I said, "I personally happen to be interested in logical ideals, and what you have shown me very clearly is that if Pentire's ideal has failed to meet the demands of human nature, your view of the demands of human nature is shown, by your own admissions, to be incompatible either with idealism or with logic. If we are to get on without these, we are left free to follow our own devices and to try to work with that which seems attractive to us without regard to consistency or to final consequences. Personally I think that after this war is over, we shall find a good many who have revolted against your view of life and will be inclined to try again on something like Pentire's lines."

"In that case," said Burnell, "I hope they will have learnt a little wisdom from experience. To my mind, Moore's ideal is at any rate more consistent than Pentire's. Moore is principally mistaken in supposing himself to be exceedingly modern and up-to-date. The truth is that he and his friends have gone back to the most ancient theory of the State in history, only he has gone back to it consistently. He is what they used to call a whole-hogger, while Pentire has thought he can take shreds and patches out of the old ideal of the State and fit them on to the new one without any loss of coherence. The old State, of course, was frankly militarist just as it was frankly authoritarian. It was not so powerful an organisation as the German State, for example, simply because the mechanism of

government was not so far advanced, the means of communication were rudimentary, the whole bureaucratic organisation was deficient in technique; but the idea of the old world was clear enough. It was that the kings and the nobles governed the common people, at bottom because they led them in war, and with a view to leading them in war. War was the supreme human activity. Industry was slovenly. The world was poor and the only fun was to be got by fighting. Well, the time came when the mass of the people began to revolt against this system and they asked for liberty. They demanded the protection of law against arbitrary processes. They demanded freedom of conscience. They demanded freedom of trade. Little by little they gained their demands. Every gain was an encroach-

ment upon the sphere of government, and every gain was justified by the growth of industry and the enrichment of the world. The uses of government became less and less, and it was clear to every man of common-sense, though it wanted the genius of Cobden to bring it home to them, that the real future of the world lay in freedom of production and exchange, and that in such a world governments would be reduced to the performance of certain elementary police functions. Now, just at that stage in came people like our friend Pentire. Progress was not fast enough for them. They saw that while a great many people were getting richer and a still larger number were becoming comfortable, there remained of course a great many who were still very poor. They wanted to remedy

the poverty and they thought they could do so by abolishing competition. Now, at this point, they ran up against one of Moore's facts of human nature. When Moore says that human nature demands competition in various forms, he lays his finger upon a truth which Pentire and his friends consistently ignore. Without competition you get slackness and inefficiency, and that is why a government department will never run industry successfully. Conceive any business man setting out to organise a new undertaking on the lines of the War Office! However, Pentire in his wisdom sought to abolish competition, and accordingly he and his friends began to set the organised State upon its legs again. Of course, they were not the only influence at work. There were all the forces of the old régime, all

the military men on the look-out for titles and pensions, and all the shipbuilders thirsting for contracts. But these men would never have had their way if Pentire had not helped them. It was the union of Socialism—if all the sloppy sentimentality which has promoted our recent legislation deserves so definite a name——with the old militaristic ideas which has produced the new State organisation, an organisation which, of course, means a perpetual oscillation between actual war and an armed peace, just as Pentire has described it. But what Pentire fails to see is that it is he and his friends who have brought about the very consummation over which he is wringing his hands. He has tried to make the best of both worlds, the old and the new, and he has ended, very naturally, by getting the worst of

them. You cannot have liberty by halves. You cannot be at one and the same time belauding the State and seeking in it the consolation of all human ills, and yet depreciating patriotism as a sentiment that leads to warfare and destruction. If you want strenuous government you must take the consequences, and the consequences are the abandonment of all notions of liberty and equality, and the reversion to Moore's ideas of military discipline; in fine, an organisation of which the natural outcome and the real purpose is war. Now, my belief is that after this frenzy the world in general will be inclined to return to commonsense. It will see what the self-contained State really means. So many millions of young men dead, blinded, maimed for life, and so many thousand millions of the accumulated treasure of

generations thrown away. People will look at it from a business point of view. Think of it only in terms of some of Pentire's pet schemes. Imagine one-tenth of the money spent upon education, or a hundredth part of it on old age pensions, and conceive the difference that it would make. After all, it is a commercial age, and my belief is that there are enough men of commonsense to decide very coolly when once their passions are laid to rest, that the thing does not pay. We shall have a return to saner methods and fewer laws."

At this point Pentire, who had been chafing under the imputation of inconsistency, broke in. "You regard liberty and law then, Burnell, as opposites, do you?"

"Oh," said Burnell, "of course, I grant

you that a certain minimum of law is necessary to public order. Force and fraud must be put down in any civilised State, and the territory must be protected from foreign enemies. But that being granted, the ideal of government is to efface itself. The old Radicals were perfectly right. The more people are free to follow their own interests, the faster the world goes on."

"In fact," said Pentire, "you are a follower of Treitschke. You regard the State as force exercised within or without as the case may be."

"But with this difference," said Burnell, "that where Treitschke regarded force as an ideal, it is to me a necessary evil of which we ought to have as little as possible. Force should exist only to quell force."

" But what kind of force are you thinking of ? " asked Pentire. " If A is physically stronger than B and could rob him of his watch or of anything else that he pleases so far as mere physical strength is concerned, you agree that the State must intervene to protect B. But supposing that A is not physically, but let us say commercially stronger—suppose that he is a capitalist employer and that B is a destitute workman, and that A proceeds to impose starvation wages or any other infamous conditions when B asks him for employment, would you say that the State is unconcerned in that matter ? "

" I should say," he replied, " that the business of the State is to secure free contract. That is to say, there should be no regulations allowed preventing B

going to C or D, who might give him better terms."

"But supposing he could get no better terms, and since he is by hypothesis starving, suppose that his internal mechanism makes it excessively inconvenient for him to wait, or rather to tramp round from one shop to another seeking work?"

"Well," said Burnell, "that is very unfortunate for him, and if I knew of such a case I should sympathise and endeavour to help it. It is a matter for philanthropy and not for the State."

"A fair field for all," said Pentire, "and philanthropy take the hindmost, appears to be your social philosophy."

"Well," he said, "that is the philosophy of freedom. It is intended to define the sphere not of morals but of law, and it is quite true that the action of the philan-

thropist, whom your comparison treats rather cavalierly, is always necessary to deal with hard cases that are left over by any system. None the less, freedom upon the whole works better than coercion."

" But," said Pentire, " my precise point is that here we are dealing with coercion. We have a society in which the greatest economic inequalities have grown up. How they have developed in the past, whether through too much law or too little ; whether through bad law or well-intentioned law, or without particular reference to law, does not matter for the moment. You will grant with me that they exist, and you cannot deny that such inequalities give enormous advantages to the possessors of wealth in any bargain that they make with those who are not equally fortunate—advantages which in extreme

cases amount to sheer coercion, quite real though possibly indirect. Now, our case is that in the whole mass of industrial legislation, interfering, as the ordinary phrase goes, with freedom of contract, the freedom has been illusory, and the interference, therefore, a complete misnomer. The true object is one which in reality accords with your own formula, if for physical force we substitute the wider and truer term 'coercion.' The State has used, if you will, coercion against coercion, and whenever it does so, with any just appreciation of the circumstances, it is not restricting but extending freedom. Just as there is no freedom for the physically weak in a society where the physically strong can use his strength according to his pleasure, so there is no sufficient freedom for those who are weak in any

essential respect, as long as those who are strong in that respect can use their strength to compel them to do that to which no reasonable man would agree if he were on terms of equality for the purpose of the bargain. There is no freedom of contract where there is great and permanent inequality between the contracting parties."

"Then," he said, "do you conceive a Government office as capable of deciding what a man ought to work at, and for how many hours, and what he ought to be paid, and I suppose what clothes he ought to wear and what boots he ought to put on, instead of leaving these things to the natural laws of demand and supply?"

"I don't know," said Pentire, "in what sense the laws of demand and supply are more natural than any other. The free operation of demand and supply seems

to be a process only guaranteed, on your own showing, by a developed and refined system of man-made law. My contention is that those laws are still imperfect in any society in which great economic inequality has arisen, and that to complete them, they require those extensions of control which we have found to be necessary during the last two or three generations. Whether the State makes a good or bad judge in particular cases is of course open to question, but we are concerned here with the meaning and the tendency of all this branch of legislation, and my point is merely that, whatever the degree of wisdom with which it has been guided in detail, its aim is not the contraction but the expansion of the sphere of freedom. Take your old Radical ideas of liberty and equality, in short, and I

say that industrial regulation, so far as it is a restraint upon the strong, comes not to destroy but to fulfil."

"Even if we grant that for the sake of argument," he replied, "it would not cover more than a fragment of social legislation. Your modern State not only prevents a man from making his own bargain with an employer, but, under the pretext of compelling him to save against sickness, fines him 4d. a week out of his wages, at the same time mulcting the employer of another 3d. Where is freedom of contract in that? It taxes the well-to-do man for the education of the spendthrift's child, at the same time compelling the said spendthrift to send his child to an elementary school to receive the education which the State prescribes. It confiscates a portion of the

thrifty man's savings to give an old-age pension to a man who has saved nothing. How do you bring these developments under the conception of coercion in restraint of coercion ? "

" I should do nothing of the kind," was the answer, " but the instances that you have taken raise, as I think, rather different principles, and I will take them separately. First of all, do I understand you to oppose State education ? Are you unfaithful to Cobden in that respect ? "

" Well," he said, " in a society like ours, where education is at a discount and parents do not spend money on a prime necessity for their children, I admit that an exception had to be made. Besides, you may remember that Cobden himself was not opposed to the industrial protection of children up to the age of

thirteen. His reason was that children are not in a position either to bargain or to judge for themselves. As a sound individualist, he was prepared to protect children against their parents as well as against other people. In insisting on education, the State secured a certain primary right to those who are not in a position to obtain it for themselves."

"So far, so good," Pentire rejoined. "You recognise by implication the doctrine that there are other ways than those by direct force or fraud of impairing the rights of a citizen. But I take it that this is not the sole ground upon which State expenditure on education is to be justified. I should put it that it is the function of the State to employ the public resources for certain great matters of public urgency, one of which is the pro-

vision for all its citizens of at least the elements of instruction, and I should apply this same principle to old-age pensions, which is the provision for the aged of at least the bare maintenance of life, independent of institutions and of philanthropy."

"What public resources do you speak of?" he asked. "A State is not a great owner of land or capital. Its expenditure is derived from revenue, and revenue is derived from the taxation of individuals, and taxation in turn means a restriction of individuals in their right to do what they please with their own."

"That," said Pentire, "is a very long question, not to be settled offhand. It involves the whole theory of property, its basis and its obligations. My contention, put very briefly, would be this:

that in all value there is a certain social as well as an individual element. The entire body of the rights of property rests upon the protection of the State, and the actual production of wealth is dependent, on the one side no doubt upon individual exertions, but on the other on the civilisation which the State maintains, the growth of population, the maintenance of order, and so on. Further, when you come to the economic analysis of the means by which wealth is gained, these rest in part upon individual exertion, but in part also on elements of monopoly value, and in part upon the system of inheritance. Two cases will be sufficient for my argument. One is site value, which is certainly not created by the owner; and the other is inherited wealth, which may have been created by

the owner's father or grandfather or more remote ancestors, but is not due to his own exertions, and would not be impaired if they were slackened. I recognise no natural right of individual property in these elements of value. They are, in a sense, no man's property; that is to say, they are every man's, and the only way in which they can be made every man's is by their falling into the coffers of the State."

"All this," he said, "implies a very scientific system of taxation."

"To be executed perfectly," replied Pentire, "no doubt it does, but in the first place I should say that a good many of our financial readjustments have been guided, not without success, by this distinction; and in the second place we are dealing with aims and tendencies, not

merely with their imperfect realisation, and my point is that, in acquiring for itself those elements of wealth which are in reality the product, not of this or that living individual but rather of the people as a whole, the State is not robbing anyone nor diminishing anyone's liberty to do as he will with that which is morally his own, but is rather garnering into its own storehouse that which should never have been allowed to pass out of it. Moreover, it is by allowing these elements of wealth to pass into private hands that the grosser economic inequalities have arisen and are perpetuated, and it is these inequalities again which impair the liberty of the less fortunate. Once more, therefore, I maintain that in reclaiming for itself the elements of social value, the State, far from sinning against the principles of

liberty and equality, is so acting as to give them a genuine and human interpretation.

"Not that that is an exhaustive statement of its purpose. Its purpose is the enrichment of the common life, and, quite apart from the liberty and equality of individuals, it justly and properly uses any of the national resources, as I have defined them, for the purpose of furthering the work of civilisation. In two words, the State uses coercion in restraint of coercion, and it employs the national resources for the development of the common life."

"And how," said he, "does this apply to the Insurance Act? Which principle governs the State in mulcting a man of 4d. out of that wage which you regard as so pitiful?"

"Ah," said Pentire, "there I think you touch upon a difficulty. I am not so sure that all modern legislative developments come within these principles that I have tried to define, and I am not so sure that it is not just at this point that they have gone wrong. You will remember that your complaint against me was that I was not wholehearted enough in my support of such interference as you call it, and that Moore presented us with a more coherent social ideal. Moore's State was to be disciplined in and out, through and through, with a discipline that should be military, industrial, commercial, educational, and you consider this to be the only consistent alternative to your principle of complete *laissez faire*. Now, my object was to show you that there was a consistent theory

of the development of State action which would not clash with the old ideals of liberty and equality, but would rather perfect them, though it would undoubtedly add to them a deepening sense of the meaning and possibilities of the common life. My suggestion is that some of our reforming spirits have fallen precisely into the same pit which you digged for me. Having once begun to think in terms of the State, they have abandoned the idea of liberty in its entirety, and they have gone on to conceive a Germanised State which prescribes to every man whatever the authorities may happen to think good for him. Here was a point at which the Radical and the reactionary could unite, and I think, in a measure, have united in recent years. The Radical got so tired of hearing the name of liberty invoked

against every attempt to restrain economic tyranny that it lost all meaning for him, while the reactionary, like Bismarck himself, was quite willing to insure some better portion of the material goods of life to the working classes if by so doing he could tame them. The workers on their side were not altogether indisposed to sell their birthright for a mess of pottage. Now we are practically told by some of those who only the other day were denounced as revolutionary firebrands, that the ideal is a disciplined society, a Germany without its militarism. This is Moore's conception, but without Moore's insight into the working of sociological cause and effect. In Germany the ultimate motive of the whole organised system is military. Take away this keystone from the arch and it would crumble. Take

away militarism—that is the whole atmosphere of fear, apprehension and ignorance as to the external factor in politics—and you will get, in this country as elsewhere, a free development of democracy, which would revert to its primary ideal and insist upon rights for the individual and the true springs of national wealth for the nation."

"Well," said Moore, "I am glad to have your description of the Liberal State, because it is so easy to show what it leaves out. With liberty, as you define it, I have no vital quarrel, and with what you say of the community and the organisation of its resources, many of my friends would warmly agree. What you utterly neglect is discipline. You forget that outside idealistic treatises this is a very hard world in which men have to be schooled

to live their lives by stern measures. Put the militarist idea aside if you can. Find something better than war if you can. I do not believe you will, but let that pass. What I demand of the State is discipline, authority, the tight rein. That is what your democracies have lacked, and that has been the root of our troubles since August, 1914."

"I challenge you on the point of fact," said Pentire. "Ever since war broke out our people have been almost pathetically asking their leaders to organise them. There is nothing they would not give, no restriction to which they would not submit if they could only be shown a way in which they could help. The defect has been in leadership, not in the people."

"That is true enough," said Bourne, "but Moore might reply that a democracy

gets the leaders it deserves. We have lived slackly, we disliked organisation, and so we let slack men get into high places and allow ourselves to be satisfied with a phrase when we should be at grips with reality."

"Oh well," said Pentire, "if you mean that there has been too much golf, I agree. But if southern England has been given over to amusement, that is because there has been not too much social democracy but too little."

"It is not only golf," said Bourne. "I mean that it is not only that you have a leisured class which amuses itself instead of working for public ends. It is a certain slackness that has pervaded all classes. Everyone seeks to put away the least fragment of an idea about his work the moment he slams the office door behind

him. He treats his work as a by-product and all his serious interest is in some game or another. Now, you must admit that the war changed all this, and that Moore is right in saying that literally millions of men found a real and deep and serious purpose for the first time."

"There is some truth in what you say," said Pentire. "Some of us have, I think, allowed too little for the place of discipline and asceticism in life. But to begin with, I should trace a good deal of the dulness of work to economic individualism. It is not only that competition has taken art out of industry, but more than that, it kills the sense of public service. My line of reform would be that of Mill—to try and make men feel that they could dig or weave for the community as well as fight for it, and if you had that

development of the common life which I tried to sketch, combined with fair treatment of the individual, I think you would give this spirit its chance. War exists at bottom, I grant you, because peace has been a failure. The world has not yet learnt how to use its industry, how to co-operate, how to find romance and glory in construction. But I will go further and grant that more of discipline is essential to a social ideal. Still, I should contend that it is not for the State to exercise discipline. It belongs to religion and ethics. It is wrong to try to make men better. The right thing is to proffer them the conditions under which they can make themselves better, and persuade them by precept and example to use them. Give the State unlimited authority and it will use it for the benefit of the powerful

classes on whom it will always have to lean. Read what the German Socialists have to say in this respect on the virtues of the belauded German State organisation. I must concede to Moore that the Germans have had more of the habit of discipline than we, and still more they have had at the head men selected for organising power. These things have stood them in good stead. But it is at this particular point that I do see the possibility of some good coming out of the gigantic evil. We had a lesson to learn and I think it will abide by us."

"But," said I, "if this is your conception of the future I do not understand the grounds of your pessimism. If you can form a coherent social theory, providing for the three terms, liberty, equality, and social duty, why be downcast because

for some few years leading men—and, if you will, the democracy itself stimulated by reaction against a conception of liberty which you yourself admit to be onesided —have swung too far towards the opposite pole? There is a very natural action and reaction, and when the present calamity is overpast, why should not society settle down to a normal development, along some such lines as those which you have traced out?"

"Ah," said he, "I have been talking of ideals. It is easy to form a social theory which shall show that all the principles that really matter are coherent, that is to say, that they could be consistently applied if people cared enough and were independent enough to apply them. The real mischief is a lack either of the will or of the capacity. It is not

the principles which are wrong but the failure of the democracy to grasp them."

"But," I urged, "at any rate the calamity of this war is not the work of democracy. Essentially it is the will of that organised military system which you reprobate, and even if you throw a part of the responsibility upon England and Russia, still it is not the peoples whom you can justly blame but the Governments."

"In a democracy," he retorted, "the Governments are what the peoples have made them, or at any rate have allowed them to be. But so far as the war is concerned, I do not press that point. I have convinced myself, as most Englishmen have done, on as careful a review of the evidence as I have been able to carry through, that this war was deliberately

willed by the ruling powers of Germany, whoever they may have been—the Kaiser, or the Crown Prince, or the General Staff. That, unfortunately, does not alter the fact that, as Europe is constituted, it is in the power of a great organised military autocracy to impose the state of warfare upon the continent as a whole, and thereby to arrest the development of the more democratic States and inevitably to give it a militarist and autocratic turn. We are compelled, as was said at the outset, to Germanise ourselves in some measure in sheer self-protection. Nor do I see any hope of such improved international relations as will save us from this standing menace to free institutions.

"But even that is not the whole of my case. Apart from and before the war, I should contend, the democratic machinery

in this country, not to speak of others which one knows less perfectly, was visibly breaking down. By general admission the authority of the House of Commons year by year was growing less, and its diminished importance was reflected in a lack of able and commanding personalities, of which in public life the necessities of the war have made us painfully aware. Ask anyone why he acquiesces in the retention of power by the present Government. The answer would be that he sees no alternative. Our public life has become so poor that there exists no other set of men, there scarcely exist any individuals in the public eye capable of importing better management, keener vision, a more alert initiative, and a more comprehensive view into the conduct of our affairs at a time when the whole nation

would turn instinctively to such a man if he should appear. It is the breakdown of Parliament which is responsible for the growth of Syndicalism, which is at bottom an idea of the collective self-help of groups of men, under conditions in which the democratic machine to which they had previously looked, had broken in their hands. If Parliament as a whole has failed, it is the breakdown of the more democratic parties which is the most conspicuous feature in the débâcle. What is the career of a democratic leader in a society like ours? He rises perhaps from the humbler classes. He knows their life and is part of it. All his sympathies are theirs. He understands their ways and their needs, but the moment that he begins to emerge he becomes a middle-class man. Still denounced as a firebrand

by society and its Press, he is insensibly drifting away from his supports. He learns to conduct correspondence, passes his life in an office, has clerks and assistants, and begins to understand the difficulties of negotiating with men of affairs. Very soon he finds that he cannot give his supporters all they want. They are not practical, and he is learning to be practical. Still perfectly sincere and heart-whole in his sympathies, he begins to realise the unreasonableness of extremes. Then the extremists in their turn begin to attack him, and just as he is getting into Parliament he finds in his constituency a small group who are already denouncing him as a Moderate. Gradually he finds points of sympathy with the very class that he has been attacking, and this class, with a kind of instinct

perfected by long experience in handling leaders of revolts, seizes the psychological moment for a change of tone. He meets capitalists and landlords in the House of Commons. He likes their manners, finds that after all they are good fellows, experiences more courteous treatment and greater forbearance at their hands than from the extreme left in his rear—in short, he is on the way to conversion, and presently some Father Ogniben reviewing his career announces that he has now seen four-and-twenty leaders of revolts. The Greek tyrant lopped off the heads of the stalks of wheat that had grown above the others in the field. Modern society uproots them with tender care and transplants them to its own garden. But in both cases the effect is the same. The mass is always leaderless. Thus, even

apart from external politics, the case of democracy would be nearly desperate; but with the growing pressure of nationalist militarism it may reasonably abandon all hope."

"You have sketched the career of the workman in politics," I said, "but have you not omitted the middle-class leader of democracy?"

"His case," he replied, "is substantially the same. What is your middle-class leader? He begins as a young man who imbibes a certain amount of democratic enthusiasm in his student days. The next twenty years he devotes to pushing his fortunes, spending an occasional evening at a workmen's club or in lecturing for a Liberal association. By the age of forty, when he is emerging, the glamour is gone and a great part of his physical

energy has been spent in the struggle for existence. He has married a clever wife, who shows her ability in cultivating social connections advantageous to her husband's career, and she involves him in the meshes of smart society, or at least society as smart as she can afford. He still rests his hopes on what he calls the people, and his first election addresses have the true democratic ring. He shows a little independence in his earliest essays in the House of Commons and probably the Government think it worth while to tame him by throwing him a minor office. He then commences statesman, and assumes willingly or unwillingly responsibility for one hundred and one acts of Government which are not particularly easy to square with his principles, and as he still works his way up his enunciation of principles becomes ever

more resounding and platitudinous, while every one of his acts is a purely temporary exception to the generalisations which he proclaims. Every exception is applauded by the Press and charms the society in which he actually moves, while his rounded formulæ serve the double function of placating his own conscience and convincing the mass of his democratic supporters that he is only biding his time for the great coup which is to set all politics on a new plane. No, I see no more hope in a middle-class leader. He was already weighed in the balance and found wanting when democracy sought its own leaders from its own ranks. English society as actually constituted, the framework which its law, its Press, its social life, even its Civil Service, all together form, is a gigantic mill for grinding revolutionism to powder.

I don't know whether it grinds very slowly, but it grinds exceeding small."

"Still," I said, "in all this don't you think you are too much influenced by temporary conditions? I should grant you that there has been a serious reaction in England, and even throughout the world, cutting across the democratic movement during the last thirty or forty years, but still the movement has gone on. There has been action and reaction, and it is hard to say to which side the balance is inclined. Just now it has dipped sharply on the wrong side, but if we take a wider view—we were beginning by considering the course of history as a whole—does not the broad progressive tendency hold? Is it not at least sufficiently marked to enable us to work, not merely in the kind of desperation you suggest, but with some

degree of rational hope that our efforts will come to fruition ? "

" Oh," he said, " you seem to me to be hankering after that law of progress which for me, as I frankly confess, was the basis of politics, I may even say of ethics and religion, for many years of my life. But I must tell you, as a candid man, I have been forced to abandon it. It is useless to talk of basing conduct and belief upon science unless we first have the scientific temper, and to say the truth, I have come to the conclusion—most regretfully and mournfully—that the supposed laws of progress are just as much the outcome of prejudice or, if you will, of faith, or at any rate of an emotional predisposition, as any of the older theologies. You may say that laws are general truths admitting of exceptions,

and that in so complicated a subject as the changes of social life we must expect many eddies in the main stream of which the causes will remain obscure. I used to comfort myself with this formula for a long time, but there comes a point at which one has to ask whether the exceptions are not just as numerous and just as important as the supposed rule. Take any of the so-called laws of progress that you please. Comte, for instance, held that the progress of society was from militarism to industrialism. Now, that was not an unreasonable opinion in 1850, but who could maintain it in 1916? What was taken for the law was itself an exception. The exhaustion of the great wars produced a torpor in Europe which gave it thirty years or so of peace. A good many people at that time supposed that

we had now arrived at normal conditions, and they proceeded to generalise the conditions of their time and to erect into scientific certainty what was nothing but a vague notion, which happened to be supported by the facts of their own age, but which a very few years were destined to prove quite illusory. Take again Comte's still more famous and more fundamental generalisation—the law of the three states. Man had begun as a theologian, then he had become a metaphysician, now he must become a Positivist. Tested by the actual facts, what truth does this generalisation show? How many men have in fact become Positivists? The centre of Positivist religion was humanity. Humanity was gradually becoming one, that is, learning to conceive itself as one, to foster and further its common life as

one, ultimately to make a religion of itself as one. Test this, as science should be tested by the truth of its predictions, what light does the history of the subsequent sixty or seventy years throw upon these prophecies? Was humanity ever less united? Were the distinctively human ideals ever more deeply discredited? Was the possibility of a peaceful co-operation of religious aspiration towards all the ends that make for harmony among mankind ever more sadly discredited? No, I will frankly avow to you that this is the root of the pessimism with which you charge me. Discarding all theological belief, confident that the truth could be found in science, and that there, established upon a rock, one could erect a working faith to guide human life, to direct effort, to console in misfortune,

I held that the direction in which to look was in the working of underlying law in human history and indeed in the whole course of terrestrial evolution. I believed that in this evolution there could be seen the germs and the gradual maturation of an order and a harmony, that the spirit making for this harmony would be what we truly know of the divine, and that to serve it was the whole duty of man. But now, looking back upon the experiment, I can see that it was conceived in a dogmatic spirit, and all that I believed was in reality matter of faith, grasping at shreds and patches of evidence here and there and bundling away all difficulties, however fatal, under some such convenient title as exceptions and casual deviations. Face the real truth and you will admit that there is no pro-

gressive law in evolution. Life changes, new types of animal organisms appear. The social order grows and decays, but the essentials are the same from first to last, with the exception that knowledge increases. But it is just this exception that is the darkest point in the whole tragedy. Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers. Tennyson is accused of platitudes, but that reflection, like many others, is a just criticism of the easy optimism of his time. Men have acquired great learning, and through learning great riches and extraordinary control over the forces of nature, but to what end all this knowledge if they have not learnt how to use it?—and if you ask what they have learnt, I reply *Circumspice*. Compare the huge town of to-day with the mediæval city; the quiet country road of the eighteenth

or even the nineteenth century with the motor-car rolling on in dust, driving the children off the last playground left to them by the encroaching landlord; and finally, most ironic of all, the sharpening of human ingenuity to its last point in engines of war that deal a destruction vaster, more horrible and more painful than any that has been known since the savage abandoned the use of poisoned arrows. There is progress enough if by progress you mean statistical increases of imports and exports, growth of population, enlargement of State boundaries. Everything is on a greater and greater scale. The mortality of one week in this war equals the whole record for many of the notable wars of history. We lost three or four times as many men at Loos as at Waterloo. If this is progress I

grant you the world moves onward, but the word ceases to express anything in which a rational man can take interest. Above all there is no law or certainty in the matter. Of course movement is no more certainly backward than it is forward. I would grant you many an improvement within the span of my own lifetime, but you solve one problem only to be encountered by another. You cut off one hydra head only to find that another has grown. Possibly, if honest men lost heart, the world would be worse than it is, but whatever honest men can do, I see no certainty that they will make it any better. If there exists any law in history at all, it is just the law of growth, and I am not of those who can glory in size."

"Well," I said, "I so far agree with

you as to think that the conception of law in history was seriously misapplied by many of the earlier social thinkers. They derived the notion of scientific law from mechanics, and they did not fully realise the difficulty of applying formulæ to the growth of a living organism. Society is made up of individual men and women, and the movements of society are therefore the net result of the interactions of countless impulses. Every one of these individuals is a centre of life. He is pushing and striving for aims of his own. His life is a life of effort, and effort is not a process that moves by mechanical law. It is always altering and adapting and shaping itself anew as its means fail or as the end itself turns out illusive or disappointing. What is true of the individual is true of the mass. The great

changes in civilisation may be regarded as collective efforts, an impetus of men in large masses towards some end; the endeavour to shape a society, to realise a religious life, to cultivate some specific form of civilisation. These efforts are always partial and incomplete. They are seldom inspired by perfectly clear ideas even of their own ends, and they are liable to frustration and disappointment through circumstances which they cannot control and perhaps do not understand. Even the individual man's own efforts, as we all know, may fail for no better reason than that they are not really founded upon his own nature, they do not express him perfectly, and he abandons them half fulfilled. Still more is this true of society. It is swayed perhaps by some new ideal, but forces arising from the human nature

which is its very tissue have not been taken into proper account, and they distort and perhaps utterly frustrate and reverse its movement before it has achieved its end. You can much more easily read the history of civilisation as a succession of efforts than as the smooth operation of a single law."

"This," remarked Burnell sardonically, "is the Nemesis of science. In place of law we get mysticism. As soon as you abandon the simple common sense conception of individuals operating upon intelligible motives, you relapse on to a mysterious general will that acts no one knows how, in fact, as you appear to tell us, does not itself know how or why, and with the at least not unnatural result that it generally fails in attaining its ends."

"There is nothing mystical in the matter," I replied. "What you call the general will—a term which I did not use—means nothing for me except the network of interacting individuals. You will grant that society is composed of so many million men, women and children, that they do interact with one another, and that as a consequence they are grouped in certain ways and produce, partly in co-operation, partly in antagonism to one another, broad results which constitute the changes of society."

"Well," he said, "I see no harm in that, but from mysticism I think you fall into platitude."

"At any rate," I said, "I am glad to find that we have so far a common ground even if it be a very lowly one. My point is this, that the mass actions

which constitute social changes are not the product of a rigid law operating like a piece of mechanism. That would, if you like, be mysticism. It would be just one form of the theory that human beings are puppets in the hands of some superhuman and quite occult agency."

"But," said Burnell, "if there is no law, there is no science."

"That may be," I said, "but I am not denying there may be law at bottom, whether in social changes or in individual psychology. If law in this connection merely means that in the human mind as elsewhere effects proceed from causes, that everything that happens has some source in the past, and there is no break in the continuous stream of existence, then I think there is law in social life as elsewhere. When I go on to ask what kind

of law, or rather what kind of causes dominate human life, my answer is that they are those which we call by such names as impulses, ideas, will, purpose, and, to use a general term, effort. Now, my point is that just as the development of the individual life proceeds through impulses, ideas, and efforts that are very often frustrated, broken short, and also at times contradictory with one another, so is it also with the mass movements which are merely compounded of individual actions, with just this difference, that the individuals act and react on one another."

"So far," Burnell admitted, "there is no mysticism, I agree."

"Then," I said, "you will not object to my speaking in the sense that we now understand of, for example, the Hellenic

spirit or the temper of the British people or the democratic impulse. You will understand that these words sum up the gathered impulses of great numbers of individuals, supposedly acting more or less in harmony with one another for a certain period and directed towards aims which are understood with greater clearness by some of the agents, with less clearness by others, but in their full meaning perhaps not adequately by any."

"I register no exception on the score of mysticism," he admitted.

"Very well," I said, "then my point is that the history of civilisation is a theatre of many movements, not of one single comprehensive advance in a definite and determinate direction. In particular the greater movements—and this seems to me the true tragedy of history—have

more than once approached a great ideal and have somehow failed on the point of realising it. The Hellenic genius conceives the city state as a centre of intensely active corporate life, as a home of an ennobling art, as yielding a basis of social peace and security for the life of the thinker and the man of science. It envisages life as a harmony of noble activities, and for a short period it attains an extraordinary measure of success, and yet its civilisation fails. The city state is unequal to the burden thrown upon it. It neither succeeds in suppressing faction within nor in achieving peaceful relations without, and with its ruin the Hellenic genius seems in some way to lose confidence in itself and—apart from a rich aftermath in science—originates nothing new. The Romans again ap-

proach the conception of a world government, a vast order that is to replace the particularism of the Greek city and plant civilisation upon the broad base which the Greeks lacked. How near the Romans came to their ideal in the age of the Antonines, and how deadly was the downfall! It is not till the thirteenth century that you will find any comprehensive plan of civilisation worthy to compare with these two; and I suppose that the ideal of a united Christendom, a spiritual order dominating life in all its parts, inspiring the government of society and the life of the individual, pressing science and philosophy into its service, and expressing itself in the renewal of art and in the fine flower of the greatest architecture in the world, had in it germs of something nobler even than the ideals of

Greece. But these germs were still further from fruition, and the mediæval ideal lost its hold on the hearts of men. Lastly, in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, you have seen the conception of a humanitarian civilisation, and the problem that is now bewildering us is whether this ideal also has played its part, and is vanishing along with its forerunners so that we can write its history and its epitaph, or whether it can yet gather up into itself new elements of vitality from sources perhaps which hitherto it has ignored, and yield to the collective efforts of man a more comprehensive and a more reasoned conception of the true purpose of mankind, by which alone can ultimate failure be averted."

"Well," said Moberley, "I like to see a man making a clean sweep of all his

preconceived opinions, and on that ground I congratulate you. In one single speech you give up the belief in law and the belief in progress, and what more in the way of candour can be asked of a Sociologist? It only remains for you to give up the belief in humanity, and to realise that the value of life lies in something quite other than social advancement, and is wholly independent of success and failure."

"Well," I said, "that is an interesting point on which I should like to hear your view. But before you congratulate me on my candour, I should like to remark that as to law it is not the business of sociology, or of any other science, to assume that its results will be capable of expression in mathematical formulæ. All that it assumes as a science is that its subject can be systematically and

impartially studied, and that it possesses a certain unity which marks it off from others and serves to connect the different investigations in the various parts of the subject matter. The only sense in which any science has a right to assume the existence of law is this—it may assume that every effect has a cause, that nothing arises out of a vacuum, but grows out of antecedents, and that is just as true of social as of individual life. Then as to progress, I neither affirmed nor denied. I only repudiated the conception of a law to which society is bound to conform, whatever the behaviour of its component individuals may be, a law prescribing that its changes are invariably for the better. Any such hypothesis as that founders in my view upon elementary facts of history."

"In that I quite agree with you," said Moberley. "In fact, I am disposed to accept your description, as I understand it, of history as a succession of more or less magnificent failures. Your account of progressive humanity reminds me of nothing so much as the Babu's academic qualification, F.F.A.—Failed First Arts—meaning in the English academic tongue that he had been ploughed in Responsions. Similarly, in your view, humanity's title to fame is that it has failed in successive attempts to establish a civilisation worthy of the name."

"But that is only one side of the shield," I replied. "These failures have left something behind them. Civilised society is a higher organism than savage society, just as man is a higher organism than the ape and the ape than the amoeba.

Progressive development may be described succinctly as a growth of organisation, and this growth, if it has not proceeded continuously, has nevertheless on the balance made enormous strides throughout the whole period of social, that is, of human evolution."

"On your formula," he replied, "Germany, as the more highly organised State, is superior to England, yet I thought you considered that the victory of the Allies was essential, not only from the patriotic point of view, but to the wider interests of civilisation."

"Organisation," I answered, "does not mean merely ingenious mechanism. It is not the best word conceivable to express my meaning, but it is the least objectionable that I know. If I may explain it briefly, I should say that one organisa-

tion may be higher or lower than another in three respects. It may first of all be larger, greater in scope, covering more of life and activity. Then it may be more complete, dominating the life of the individual or of the community more fully, and directing it more efficiently. And lastly, it may be more organic, and that means that the life of the whole and the parts is more completely interwoven. Where you have mechanical organisation, it may be very efficient, but it is simply imposed upon the parts, who are dominated by it as so many lifeless units, and that is the case in a well-ordered autocracy. Where, on the other hand, the individual members of society spontaneously contribute to the life of the whole, you have the kind of organisation which is genuinely organic. Now, in the

biological world, the species which are latest in time, and which comprise the human race and those nearest to man, satisfy these three tests, and I should contend that the same thing is true, on the whole, of the social development of modern life. The problem of uniting very large societies into compact and efficiently administered units, preserving freedom and spontaneity for individual members and subordinate associations, has never been so nearly solved. Unfortunately, the final problem of so uniting all humanity has not been solved, and till that is achieved there is no security for the gains already won."

"Well," said he, "my advice to you and to Pentire would be to cease troubling about this security, for you will not find it. You are attempting the impossible.

Consciously or unconsciously, you are seeking to found a faith which shall sustain you in reverses on the facts of life as you see them in this world. If it were only your personal fortunes that affect you, this might be possible. You might pass out of yourselves, as it were, and throw yourselves upon the broad stream of humanity. You might say: let your name perish, but let humanity be free. But your trouble is this, and it is one in which, if I can succeed in putting myself for the moment at your point of view, I can thoroughly sympathise. Humanity is, so to say, your god. I don't mean in the half-literal Comtist sense, but in a sense that it is that form of reality to which you would turn, on which your efforts are founded, and for which your ideals are valid, if they are

valid at all. Now, the misfortune is that your god has deceived you. It is an image with feet of clay. Humanity is not worshipful, but is a very mixed assemblage of beings and of qualities good, bad and indifferent. Its life grows in a sense larger, certainly far more powerful, but does not grow better; on the contrary, every new achievement over nature serves mainly to arm man more efficiently and with more deadly weapons against man. Now Pentire, I think, realises this point. He sees, in fact, that the notion of the service of man leads nowhere. It works out to nothing more coherent than Moore's conception of the militant state as you analyse it. What he does not see is that you must look elsewhere for that kind of mental sustenance, comfort, consolation, stimulus, which successive genera-

tions have found in religion. You may think what you will about the speculative truth of any particular theology, but as a practical basis of life, if you adhere to this world you are lost. This you will recognise yourself of the worldly man in the ordinary sense of that term, meaning a man who is set upon selfish and material gains. The tragedy of your humanitarian school is that, set upon unselfish and immaterial gains, they have none the less expected to reap them in this world, and that is to enter the path of lasting disillusion."

"Then," I said, "your religion is apart from this world and indifferent to the fate of man?"

"To his fate, in a sense, Yes," he replied, "but to his life and his duties, No This world is for us not the ultimate

reality, perhaps not reality at all. At most it is a phase or a sphere in which we have to live for a while, and in which we have definite duties to perform. These duties certainly seem to serve a social end, but whether their results come to fruition or not, it is not for us to ask. Ours but to do and die, or do and live, just as the event, which is not within our control, may determine. The reason for all this is in one sense hidden from us, but in another it is plain. It is hidden from us in the sense that no history, no science and no philosophy has yet explained the function of our little lives upon this world in the great scheme of things; but it is plain in the sense that our relation to the great spiritual world which underlies nature is clear to each of us if, as the old saying is, we become

as little children; if, that is, we are content to follow a well-beaten track without asking where it is leading us, content to move on simply because we have our orders. Unless we reflecting men can realise the shortness of our own reflections and throw ourselves frankly upon that which is below and above and all around the span of our short lives, then we are of all living beings the most miserable, for we see the failure and the death which is hidden from the suffering beast."

I was about to reply with a defence of human reason when Sister Agatha intervened.

"I don't think you can really mean," she said, "to separate the two worlds as you seem to do. Like you, I should feel that if this life were all, the situation of man would be a very tragic one; but I

cannot feel, as you seem to do, that duty is just the drill sergeant ordering us about hither and thither, and that we have no right to ask where we are going or what it will be worth to us to reach our goal. I think that if we have conscience, or what some of us call the inner light, which shows us our relation to something higher than ourselves, one of the things it tells us is that we have a reason which it is our business to use. And one thing my reason seems to tell me is that it is possible for men, if they have the patience to learn and the skill to acquire, to discover a great deal that is worth knowing of their past history, and thereby of their present position and of the possibility of making a better future, and I think that as they reflect they come to see that many things that seemed

quite certain and self-evident in the childhood of the race were perhaps only fit for children. And among other things, simple obedience to accepted rules is very necessary when reason is in its infancy, but when it grows up it is right to ask the meaning of those rules and even to reject them if they seem to make life worse rather than better. I cannot think of God as indifferent to the fate of human beings even here on this earth. I think that somehow this life, with all its turmoil and all the fighting and all the failure, must be working towards some end in the universal scheme, and I am sure you think so too. The difference seems to be that you regard this end as necessarily withdrawn from your view and deem it useless and perhaps harmful to attempt to discover it, whereas I should say that

it is our business to use our reason, and that the supreme effort of reason would be just to understand why we are here and what we are going to make of the life of man upon earth. I think, too, that if we did understand that, we should have a clearer view of our relation as beings who, after all, are here and now alive in this world and parts of this human race, to the larger life in which I believe as you do, and it seems to me that when our friends here are trying to interpret human history as a process which has a meaning and works towards some definite end, they are attempting, so to say, to justify the ways of man to God, or rather perhaps to show that God is working in history in the whole life process, and not merely in some mysterious limbo outside and behind it. I think if they

could carry their task through, they would arrive by a longer route at the same ultimate result as ours, only they would have done this great service, that whereas we rather feel and know religion within ourselves, they would have demonstrated it as a working factor in the ordinary commonplace world, and thereby put it beyond the reach of cavil, just like the law of gravitation or anything else that is proved by physical science."

"Ah," said Moberley, "there I confess you have a faith that exceeds mine. That science gives us a certain limited truth of course we all admit. But science is barred by its own postulates from any successful approach to the fundamental issues. All science ends, if it does not begin, in mathematics. It calculates from data which it never explains, and in

order to calculate it breaks up its object into parts so as to deal with each severally. Now, so long as it is dealing with matter and material forces, this is well enough. You can resolve matter into atoms, calculate the path of each of these and combine them into a total result. But the moment that you are dealing with life and mind, the analytic process breaks in your hands. Here it is precisely the spirit of the whole that counts, and the moment you begin to dissect you kill it. Far from being able to explain the universe as a whole, science can never deal satisfactorily with the living beings that move on this little earth's surface. To understand life you must live, and to understand other lives you must have the sympathetic insight which is instinct and not intellect."

"Do you mean," I asked, "that to understand others you must have as your basis a certain more or less congruous experience?"

"Not at all. What you want is imagination, not abstract principles."

"But, I suppose you want imagination to be founded on something. Otherwise its constructions will all be castles in the air. Now, as I understand the kind of imagination that you mean, it has a solid substratum in, for example, your own living experience or in mine, and from this it works outward, interpreting other lives and entering into them with much more subtlety no doubt than the reasonings of commonplace logic, but still on essentially the same principles—extending experience by inferences and correcting the results by further experience and so on. If you mean merely to protest

against the interpretation of life by abstractions not founded in living experience, I am with you. But if you mean that such abstractions are the only things known to reason, I must object that you are taking a part for the whole."

"The insight that I speak of," he said, "has nothing to do with either reason or experience. It is instinct as Bergson conceives it, that is a sympathetic insight in which the animal or the man—in so far as he has not become the slave of intellect—puts himself in the place of another, identifies himself with it for the moment."

"It seems a strange form of sympathy," I objected, "which impels the ferret to leap upon the rabbit. If the ferret put himself in the rabbit's place, he would naturally object to being leapt upon."

"That is not the point," he replied.

"The ferret has a direct apprehension of the nature of the rabbit which is not a matter of intellect but an intuitive grasp belonging to the original unity of mind, one of the ways in which it works, just as intellect is another way. Man has in large measure lost his instincts by trusting to his intellect, which is all very well for certain special purposes, but wrecks him when he tries to apply it to other purposes. Animals and particularly insects, on the contrary, have developed instinct at the expense of intellect."

"May I test this then," I asked, "by a trivial instance from the insect world? There is a certain beetle which is brought up from the larval stage in the nest of wild bees. It is hatched out in neighbourhoods where bees do congregate, and it attaches itself to their hairs so that

it gets carried to the nest. Now, we cannot suppose the larva to have any appreciation of the reason why it clings on to the bee. It has no means of knowing what kind of creature it is upon or whither it will be carried or how it will fare when it gets to the bees' home."

"Clearly not," he said. "That is my point. It has a direct apprehension of the bee as its appropriate host."

"But, wait a moment," I said. "You have not heard the whole story. The larva will go for anything hairy, bee or no bee, and we are told that great numbers perish by choosing an unsuitable attachment. It is precisely the direct insight that fails."

"Then how do you explain the cases which succeed?"

"The ordinary explanation is that the larva beetle is disposed by an hereditary

tendency to respond to hairy substances with the efforts necessary to attach itself to them. It does not matter for present purposes whether this disposition is something purely physical or whether it involves, as I should suppose, certain conscious efforts. What matters is that in a proportion of cases sufficiently large to secure the survival of the species, the response will be suited to the needs of the creature. Instinct, in short, does not involve any miraculous insight, but is a kind of structure roughly adapted to the needs of the organism, this roughness involving the repeated and ruthless extermination of individuals."

"Very well," he replied, "then you come back to the survival of the fittest, and if this is the last word of science, could you have a more complete negation of all that makes life of value?"

"If it were the last word, you could not. But you may have remarked that I abstained from saying that the survival of the fittest was the source of the instinct. I confined myself to the statement that the instinct secured survival at the cost of much waste. This has an important bearing on our question, for in this, as in some other respects, your criticisms are much more applicable to the science of the last generation than to that of to-day. For instance, a generation ago it was thought that the forms of life, the highest along with the lower, could be explained as the cumulative effect of the small variations which any two individuals will exhibit. These might be regarded as originally mere chance variations, that is to say as proceeding in no determinate direction, neither laid

down on any plan, nor issuing from any definite tendency within the organism to grow in one way rather than another. Thus all evolution seemed planless, and the shape it has actually taken was due to the *ex post facto* success, so to say, of one variety as compared with another in dealing with the conditions of its life. Now it has become pretty clear that this explanation will not cover the facts, and you will find biologists in consequence either thrown back on the fixity of the species or driven to admit some directive element, whether in the efforts of the organism itself or in an external agency."

"Either of which," he remarked, "would be to admit the bankruptcy of science, since it would bring in purpose or at any rate life and effort as a working cause."

"Are you not reasoning in a circle?"

I asked. "You began by denying that science could deal with mind, and now when I suggest that science may be by sheer pressure of the evidence compelled to recognise Mind as a cause, you deny that this can be science. My contention, on the contrary, would be that if we apply science to the living world—that is to say, if we pursue the subject methodically and weigh the facts impartially—what we find is that mind—the mind within the organism—must be recognised as a factor in its life, and a growing factor, which as it becomes more conscious of itself, plays a larger and larger part in the course of evolution. So much so that I can conceive a stage at which it would be the dominant factor."

"This," he said, "is merely humanitarianism run mad, its form of delusion

being one not unknown in asylums, where you will often find men who believe themselves to be God. The cold teaching of your bare science is that organic evolution is a superficial incident in the later life of a planet that is rapidly cooling, that is, in fact, dying, and is a part of a universe which is itself running down through the constant dissipation of energy. Chaos is at the end of the world, not at its beginning, according to science."

"Again," I replied, "you quote theories which would have been maintained much more confidently a generation ago than to-day. All speculations about the life of the earth have been disarranged by the discovery of radio-activity, and the incident is a lesson in the danger of applying mathematical calculation to assumed data in relation to a problem

of interest. Thinkers made some assumptions about the sources of heat, calculated periods of time from these data, and arrived at conclusions as to the life of the earth. By the end of the process some of them forgot that the whole thing rested upon assumptions, and gave the conclusions as demonstrated truth. But as soon as other possible sources of heat appeared, all these calculations were thrown out. Now, the whole mechanical theory of the universe reasons from assumptions, and no doubt reasons correctly. But the results themselves show that the assumptions cannot give the whole truth because they yield a one-sided process. They represent the world as eternally running down, and do not show how it could ever get wound up."

"Very well, but all this only goes to

make science a witness to its own bankruptcy."

"Say rather to the bankruptcy of materialism. The wonderful thing is that physical science, which is supposed to reduce everything to terms of matter, is itself beginning to abolish matter as the hard, self-contained, ultimate entity of ordinary thought, and reducing it to a form, one might almost say to a mode of behaviour, of something more primordial. So conceived matter ceases to be the fundamental tissue on which life and mind are mere embroideries. All three become alike forms of something more ultimate, lower and higher stages of organisation. In place of the hard antithesis of mind and matter you get the conception of an organic principle in different phases of development."

"But why does your organic principle so often fail in the manner you have yourself described?"

"If I could answer that question," I replied, "I should have solved a problem which we are only just beginning to state in its proper terms. I make no such profession. I say only that in my belief we are coming to a point at which we shall be able to deal with the spiritual order with the same definiteness with which science has in past times treated the mechanical order, and that we shall as a result be able to apprehend the meaning of life, not with the poet's vision or the apostles' faith or, again, in the twilight of half-serious dialectic, but as the substance of plain and cogent scientific demonstration."

"Well," he said, "you at any rate are to

be congratulated on your confidence. You need no faith if you can get everything out of science. My only fear is that in escaping from faith you are rushing into credulity."

"Your congratulation and warning," I replied, "are both premature. I did not maintain that the desired conclusion was reached, and since it is not reached I do not pretend to know what it is. I only maintain that on its present lines a path is opening out to science which may lead it to the very heart of reality, so revealing the sources of what we call the spiritual as well as what we have called the material order; but what it will find there and how far it will justify any of our hopes is another question, and unfortunately there is much in the world, and not least in contemporary events, to give pause to any hasty optimism."

"In taking this attitude," said Sister Agatha, "you seem to me to do yourself less than justice. On all the positive side of your theory I seem to agree with you. We start from different ends but appear to meet at a point. At any rate, I don't believe in the opposition between science and religion, or between practical life and the life of the soul. There are not two worlds, one God's and the other man's, or perhaps the devil's. There is only one world. What we touch and see is only a small part of it, but it is a part and is of the same tissue. I must believe that God works in this world, not merely above it, or I cannot believe that He works at all. Nor can I believe that He sets us tasks merely to test us like children, but rather, if we are to keep to metaphor, bids us help like men

in work that urgently needs performing. You may repudiate all these phrases, but your own suggestion points to a spiritual principle which develops in the world, and I imagine all good work must be a part of that development. Thus, your view would provide the framework that I need. Yet for your own purposes you decline to fit it in. You insist on leaving it as a possibility which you will neither affirm nor deny."

"I am careful," I explained, "not to pretend in my own mind to know what as yet is really unknown."

"Must you not be equally careful to render an exact account of whatever confidence you possess at the bottom of your mind? You will say that any unreasoned belief is treacherous, and often in fact proves false. But must we not here, too,

distinguish between form and substance? Many well approved scientific theories have in the end been overthrown. In these cases you would still contend that the logical method—which is the heart of science—was right, and even proved its rightness by exposing its own errors. May we not allow faith, like reason, its errors of form without denying it all substance? Undoubtedly faith, if one is honest with one's experience, changes its form just as much as scientific theory if one is honest with the facts. I myself used to believe with assured faith in an omnipotent God, who made the world out of nothing, created man in His own image, gave him freedom of action and allowed evil to test his soul. Once I held this as faith, now I think it childish. It was just a form that served to enshrine

the real truth for the time being, and the truth remains while the form passes."

"But," said I, "if faith is so variable, what is it beyond a subjective consciousness which may change from year to year and will certainly vary from person to person? How can you be sure that you have got down to the imperishable substance, or that whatever belief you formulate will be one that will remain with you?"

"I don't pretend," she replied, "to be able to formulate it in any way that is beyond the reach of cavil, but I should call it a state of confidence and trust in the validity of the best things—reason, justice and love, and I should say that this confidence really underlies the most sceptical philosophy, which is at bottom based on the conviction that reason is

so much better than anything else that you must follow it, even when it leads you into darkness. The very fact that reason leads you nowhere and yet you consent to be led by it, is a proof of your faith."

"I grant," I replied, "that we may as rationalists have faith in reason, and in justice as what is reasonable in action, and in love as the emotional life that sustains and fires reason and justice. But hatred, injustice and unreason are no less stubborn facts. The world is a scene of contention, and reason does not itself tell me that reason must always win. Truth is great, but will it always prevail? Here is the centre of our difficulty. Pentire has gone to history, so to say, to find God. He applies his test without prejudice and it fails him. If you tell him that still he must keep his faith, he will

answer that faith is just what he lacks. He went out into the wilderness to find rational assurance, but he finds no such rose blooming there. He finds only a reed shaken by the wind."

"Doubtless the world exhibits good and bad, love and hate, all in a welter together. But can you from our present point of view put them on a level so as to cancel off one against the other? If the course of the world is a development, surely what is most significant is the good and beautiful that has come into being, not the ugliness and strife that remain. Someone once told me that what preserved his faith was his wife—not her faith or philosophy, nor yet his love for her, but the simple fact of the existence of a woman who, after twenty-five years of married life, he found as perfect

as he had ever believed her to be in the first months of romance. 'A world,' he said, 'cannot be altogether rotten which can produce a being whose whole life is a continued act of unselfish love, and whose very being diffuses charm and joy and peace. Through her I have learnt how near happiness lies to man, and how untrue it is that there is satisfaction only in endless pursuit. If God made her He must be a good and wonderful God, and if she has emerged as the work of æons from primitive protoplasm, then it only shows what protoplasm has in it to do if you give it time.' An insecure argument, you may say, which bases the pyramid on its apex. If our friend had happened on a bad wife he would, on his own showing, have cursed the world. Yet you might have a certain sympathy

with his point of view. If you start from protoplasm, the wonderful thing is not that you should find so many failures, but that you should reach any real success. It is your highest point which will give you the truest measure of your possibilities."

"From the developmental point of view," I admitted, "that is fair enough. But it is still of possibilities not certainties that we are speaking."

"Yet that certainty is all the time within you. The very fact that you can look on your most cherished theories coolly like a detached spectator is proof of an underlying confidence, not in the theories themselves, but in a deeper meaning of which they serve only as a sort of provisional model. Faith, as I hold it, is no prophecy of concrete events. It will not tell you that we shall win this war.

It will not even remove your doubt whether this whole present phase of evolution may not break down. What it tells you is that whatever the event, the struggle is always worth the cost. It tells you that in the temper in which you take defeat, there is something more vital than immediate success. It can offer none of the allurements of optimistic prophecy, but rests on a reality which endures through all changes of fortune."

"Do we come then to the Stoic principle, to withdraw into ourselves, wrap ourselves in our own virtue and condemn the world?"

"That is the self-mutilation of faith. It is to exalt the self and accept defeat for the world. The spirit which I describe works out its effects in this life. Slow and indirect, they are more real and deep than those of outward victory. To this, surely, experience itself

testifies. Faith's true function is to fix the mind firmly on this deeper triumph and so sustain the creative reason in its unceasing efforts to find a way. It is for reason itself to review the field and study all the lines of advance. It is for faith to sustain the mind in each check and inspire every fresh attempt, and the more you look inward for this, the more untroubled will be your view of the outer world which is there to be conquered. I think, therefore, that we must go back into ourselves for faith, and away from ourselves into the world for reason. The deeper we go into ourselves the more we throw off forms and find the assurance not only that the great things exist, but that they are the heart of our lives, and, since after all we are of one stock, they must be at the heart of your lives as well

as mine. You say there are bad men and wars and cruelties and wrong. I say all these are the collision of undeveloped forms. What is the German suffering from but a great illusion that the State is something more than man, and that power is more than justice? Strip him of this and he is a man like yourself, pouring out his blood for the cause that he loves, and that you and I detest. Probe inwards, then, and you find the same spring of life everywhere and it is good. Look outwards, and you find, as you yourself admit, the slow movement towards a harmony which just means that these impulses of primeval energy come, so to say, to understand one another. Every form they take as they grow will provoke conflict, perish, and be cast aside until the whole unites, and there you

have the secret of your successive efforts and failures, which yet leave something behind them. God is not the creator who made the world in six days, rested on the seventh and saw that it was good. He is growing in the actual evolution of the world. You admit this as possible, but you will not allow yourself to believe in it as actual. You will say your business is to probe all opinions. But probe your own scepticism, and beneath it will you not find the essential assurance of which I speak? Every form this assurance takes may be destroyed, but does not the assurance itself spring up again just because it is as much the moving force in rational criticism as in confident action? Look within, then, and you find one side of the fundamental truth, since you yourself, as the Indian thinkers found

out, touch the ultimate springs of being. Look without, and you can see enough to recognise the streams that flow from them. If you cut yourself off from one side you fall into doubt and despair. If from the other, you relapse into other-worldliness and superstition. In a great calamity which disarranges your beliefs and cheats your hopes, you must fall back on the faith within, which will tell you that you mistook the course of history and looked for too easy a fruition. Yet in this harder way of life the same essential soul will find itself winning through a sacrifice and suffering, of which you could not endure to think, a crown of which you had not dreamed."

Midnight had struck while Sister Agatha was speaking. It was our New Year's message.

III

THE FUTURE OF INTERNATIONALISM

(*The substance of an address delivered at the National Liberal Club, January 18th, 1916.*)

A CYNIC might suggest that this discourse need be no longer than the celebrated chapter upon snakes in Iceland. It might suffice, in the present condition of Europe, to state succinctly that there will be no future for internationalism. If I believed that to be true, I would at least accompany the dictum with another, which I think follows from it with inevitable logic —namely, that there is in that case no

future for civilisation. The world has become full, changes rapid, intercommunication ever more easy. Physically speaking, all mankind tends to become more and more of a unity. The self-centred life of separate communities, more or less possible in old days, is no longer compatible with the existing order of things. For good or for evil, men must live together in continual intercourse—Russians, Germans, Austrians, French, and British —in a single continent, and if there are no regular, orderly, peaceable, and just relations maintained and established between them, then there will be irregular, disorderly, hostile, and tyrannical relations. The world must, in consequence, be more and more given up to war and preparations for war. In ever-increasing ratio armaments must eat up the surplus

of material industry, and warlike passions absorb the energies that would otherwise be given to social regeneration and the advancement of the peaceful arts, while war itself will sweep away as soon as they are renewed the youthful manhood and vigour of the peoples.

The alternative is to find some orderly mode of governing the intercourse of nations, and the pessimist who fully realises the force of the two alternatives might urge a good deal of recent history in favour of his interpretation of the outlook. He might say that, in spite of the development of democracy, the spread of education, and the growth of a good deal of quite genuine humanitarian feeling, the pressure of hard circumstances had forced, and is still forcing, the nations of the modern world to adopt in self-protection

those doctrines of a highly disciplined, self-contained State, which lie at the root of modern militarism, and have flowered and borne fruit in the present war. Springing up first in Germany, this conception of the State is taking root in soil like our own, to which it is least congenial. It is not, on the whole, preference but necessity which governs us. The State which devotes its entire energies directly or indirectly to the increase and improvement of its power as a fighting machine, is naturally a better fighting machine than its rivals. Germany was first in the field. She built up a system of government, a highly educated bureaucracy, a trained and experienced military staff, and a people whose physical and mental efficiency she has fostered to the point necessary to making them the best possible

instruments of her policy, giving them just enough political liberty to retain their willing devotion, and yet keeping them in that substantial subservience which enables the autocratic power of the war-lord to hurl them, when the time comes, as a single passive body against the foe. The effectiveness of this system, it may be argued, has been proved by the course of the war itself, and other nations, if they are to hold their own against Germany in the future, must fall into line. Economically they must be self-contained. To have to rely upon the supply of any article essential in wartime from overseas, or from any foreign country, is a source of potential weakness. Compulsory service is a matter of course. The subjection of the working classes to the directive function, in industry as in politics, is the

keynote of the whole. The self-contained, disciplined, military State is the political entity of the coming future. The hinges upon which such a State turns are compulsory service and economic protection. To the first of these in principle we have already been compelled to resort. The second is now being accepted by some of those who were the most strenuous advocates of Free Trade. The future of England—of all States that which stood out longest and most strongly in opposition to the German ideal—is now set upon German lines, and we have, in fine, to contemplate a continent consisting of a group of States similarly armed and equipped. In such a continent there can only be two conditions. It may pass from war to armed peace, or rather truce, and from the armed truce back again to war,

but war must remain the keynote of its life. This is, I suppose, a conceivable forecast of the political future; but it is not a forecast of a civilised Europe, but rather of progressive re-barbarisation, and it is, therefore, worth enquiring what possible alternatives lie before us, and what we may hope to make of them.

The older internationalism, based on a belief in humanitarian ethics on the one hand, and in the peaceful tendencies of commerce on the other, is dead. In principle, I suppose, it perished when the nations, instead of fulfilling Cobden's prophecy, and following the example set by England in adopting Free Trade, began to foster their new industries by protective tariffs, and to seek for new fields of industrial development in the weaker or less developed countries, which they

sought to enclose each within its own tariff wall. The nineteenth century associated the idea of nationality and liberty, and the connection was genuine enough as long as it applied to subject peoples struggling to be free. But that very growth of national consciousness which inspired the struggle for freedom, turned to exclusiveness and imperiousness as soon as it had achieved its end, and nationality as an exclusive principle—as a kind of collective egoism justifying itself, as ordinary egoism is never allowed to justify itself, in contempt for law and justice and the corresponding rights of others—has become the dominating force in twentieth-century politics, and has destroyed the cosmopolitan ideas of free intercourse in which the men of Cobden's time saw the solution of the miseries of the world.

Now, we cannot go back upon nationality. We have rather to go through with it. We shall get no permanent tranquillity in Europe until nationality and freedom are reconciled once more, that is to say, until we have carried, as far as geographical conditions allow, the adjustment of political unities to national sentiment. The ideal of the future must be not cosmopolitan but international. It must not rest upon a destruction of that feeling of unity which internally is the best foundation of political order; and the spokesmen of our country were right in coupling the rights of nationality along with the maintenance of public law as the double object for which the Allies engaged in the present war. Earlier attempts to establish a concert of Europe were wrecked, as is well known, and as I shall have

to mention a little more in detail presently, upon troubles arising from the refusal of rights to subject nationalities, and it is out of the struggles of subject nationalities that the immediate occasion of the present war arose. As long as there is a single nationality in Europe left discontented with its position, there will always be a focus of possible disturbance, around which discordant elements may gather like the bacteria about an inflamed spot.

My business, however, at present is not with possibilities of settlement upon truly national lines—possibilities which raise questions of most intricate and perplexing difficulty, but with the relations of the States which emerge as independent entities after the present contest, however they may be constituted. Can we con-

ceive any kind of unity growing out of the discord of Europe? Can we devise any mechanism giving us better hope of more peaceful relations? Can we even assume any more assured disposition towards the ways of peace and a permanent aversion from war when once the bitterness of the immediate experience and the exhaustion consequent upon the effort are past? There are some familiar alternatives to war which occur as of course. We can devise fresh schemes of arbitration and conciliation; and there are some who think that by starting on the lines of the efforts which were familiar in the pre-war days, working with and from the Hague Tribunal, strengthening its functions where they were weak, and devising councils of conciliation for those cases to which arbitration does not apply, we

may make some progress towards the desired end. I must confess to a feeling of chill when I hear these familiar terms upon the tongue of sincere enthusiasts for peace, and I am not much warmed by some of those strengthening tonics which they propose to infuse into their otherwise rather dilute medicine. I have heard it suggested, for example—I believe the proposal is popular in the United States—that all nations should solemnly agree: first of all, to submit their differences to some sort of tribunal, or, in the alternative, to some board of conciliation; and in the second place to interpose a year's delay from the time when they do so to the outbreak of war. I must confess that the proposal to avert war by means of an agreement to a year's postponement reminds me of nothing so

much as the well-known method of catching birds by putting salt upon their tails. If you could get States to a frame of mind in which they would agree to wait for a year before fighting, could you not as readily get them to forego a war altogether?

More serious, perhaps, is the suggestion that States should combine against any single member of the European system that refused to submit its case to peaceable adjustment. They should engage, in such an event, either to come to the aid of the other party with arms in their hands, or, at the lowest, to punish the offender by a commercial boycott. With regard to this proposal, however, two questions suggest themselves, to neither of which can I see an adequate answer. The first question is how States

are to be kept to their engagements. The most unfortunate thing that has happened to Europe is that the authority of a national engagement, even of the most solemn kind, has been sensibly impaired, and confidence of this kind once lost is not easily restored. Supposing the several countries of Europe entered into such an undertaking, would they keep it? And what is almost equally important, would each believe that the other would keep it?

There is a second question which, I think, has not been faced by the advocates of this particular remedy. What would be the effect of any such undertaking in the existing condition of Europe? A commercial boycott, or even armed intervention, would be very effective if we imagine five great Powers, to say

nothing of the smaller States, combined against one. But Europe, as it actually is, has ceased to be an aggregate of six separate Powers with a cluster of smaller States around them. It has become divided into two great groups, and unless the event of the war is more shattering than its course at present promises, something like this group formation must be assumed as a fact that we have permanently to reckon with. Now, in the first place, in such a formation it would be quite impossible to bring a boycott to bear on any single Power, because this would involve the breaking up of the group system. In the second place, if we sought to apply the boycott to one or other group as a whole, it becomes ineffective. Both in the commercial and in the military sense, as the event of

this war has, on the whole, shown, either group is able to stand by itself sufficiently long to wage a most determined struggle. Unless the alliances break up, therefore, anything like the system of guarantees suggested would be inadequate for its purpose. A condition precedent to success in this direction would, therefore, be the break-up of the alliance. Whether this be or be not desirable in itself, it is unlikely to come about, and will certainly not be brought about by the well-meant scheme intended to take its place, for each nation will have more confidence in its allies than it would in the guarantees of an untried system.

I am forced, therefore, to the conclusion that we must either go further or not attempt to move at all, and I should agree with my friend, Mr. Hobson, that

there is no final guarantee of a permanent peace except in the formation of an international State. Even the formation of a single State is not an absolute guarantee of peace, for old rivalries might break out again in civil war. Nevertheless, statehood is the most definite guarantee of internal order that human wit has devised, and we may agree that, short of that kind of common organisation which is realised in a federal State, there is no rest for the feet of the messenger of peace.

But when we look at the past history, and still more at the present condition of Europe, can we readily imagine any movement towards a political union being set on foot with any hopes of success? When we think of the deep bitterness engendered by the war itself and its conduct, of the mutual distrust of diplo-

matists and of nations, of the immense variety of interests, the extraordinary differences of political, social and economic development, the interweaving of different speeches and hostile nationalities, we must grant that no statesman in history has ever yet attacked, or even envisaged, such a problem as that of imposing political union upon forces so discordant. Where, then, are we to look for guidance? It is the part of statesmanship not to conceive an ideal in the abstract and clap it down forcibly upon the facts of the day, to fit or not to fit as the event may determine, but rather to consider existing tendencies, to select from among them those that seem to make for order and harmony, and within these to cultivate what is most promising, and endeavour to prune away all injurious excrescences. Let us try to

consider the facts from this point of view, and to ask how far past experience throws any light upon our problem.

There are, I suppose, three possible ways in which the unity of a congeries of peoples might be achieved. The first and simplest is through the aggrandisement of a single Power, and the reduction of the rest to a subordinate position. This experiment has been made in Europe in modern times three or four times over. Spain in one century, France in two successive centuries, aimed at a kind of hegemony of Europe, and Germany at the present time is repeating the attempt. In the past Europe has proved too hard a nut to crack, and our hope and belief is that on this point history will repeat itself. Better, we all feel, the strife of independent nations, however terrible the

possibilities that it entails, than the peace of tame subordination which would leave the moulding of the European future to a single hand, and that not of the lightest. Putting aside this possibility, we come next to the conception of a voluntary union. Now, the experiment of a united Europe is not wholly new. The experience of the French wars bred in the peoples of Europe much such a longing for permanent peace as many of them are experiencing at the present day. It also engendered a fear of France, and a determination, at all costs, to prevent the French renewing their aggression, which is very closely parallel to the feeling entertained in the allied countries at the present time towards Germany. This double motive is to be found operating in the minds of the statesmen who re-

settled Europe at the Congress of Vienna, and who for some six or seven years from that time did actually achieve a kind of federation which aspired to be what the German Chancellor called a "European Areopagus," and at successive Congresses acted as such. It is only of quite late years—largely, I think, due to the work of Mr. Alison Phillips—that the statesmen who took part in this work have had full justice done to them. They were stamped in history—and particularly in history as Liberals understood it—as the oppressors of nationalism, and the supporters of domestic tyranny. The Holy Alliance of the sovereigns became a bye-word among democrats, and in view of their later history it was not without reason that Mazzini proclaimed in opposition to them the Holy Alliance of the

peoples. The Tsar Alexander, who was the moving spirit throughout, was, in reality, a mixed character, but his popular sympathies and his chivalrous respect for a beaten enemy were, at the outset, just as genuine as his conversion to the ideas of Metternich was later on a wholehearted change of mind. What concerns us is to know, first of all, how much the Alliance effected, and, secondly, upon what difficulties it foundered.

First of all, then, it prevented the dismemberment of France. This was its most memorable and permanent achievement. It was the Tsar's idealism on the one hand, and the practical good sense of English statesmen on the other, which resisted the pressure of the Prussians, who were for leaving France a paralysed and helpless member of the European

community. The Alliance was, in the first place, brought together and held together by fear of France, and yet it was the Alliance which saved France from destruction and which ultimately admitted France to its conferences and restored her to a place in the council of the nations. In the second place, as Mr. Phillips shows, the Alliance preserved peace during the exceedingly difficult and anxious years that succeeded Waterloo and thereby initiated that generation of comparative tranquillity upon which the progress of the nineteenth century depended. In the third place, in successive conferences, the Alliance actually dealt with numerous affairs, great and small, wisely or unwisely as the case might be. It proved that a conference of Powers could be got together, and that, notwithstanding the atmosphere

of intrigue that surrounds a diplomatic congress, could be brought to give decisions which were accepted. Yet it was on the more acute of the problems with which it was faced that the Alliance finally foundered, and we can sum up its difficulties under two heads, one of them inherent in the situation, the other peculiar to the character of the Alliance itself. The first of these is the difficulty of drawing the line between internal and external affairs. This was a difficulty which Alexander himself had long foreseen, and he was accustomed to speak of a harmonious relation between rulers and subjects, that is to say, of some form of political liberty or constitutionalism, as a necessary condition for the smooth functioning of an alliance, the primary object of which was to hold the peace between established

sovereigns. Had such internal harmony been realised, had every one of the nations represented in the Alliance consisted of a homogeneous people each contented with its ruler, had the functions of the conference consisted only in adjusting difficulties between ruler and ruler, had there been no question as between ruler and ruled, the principal difficulties upon which the Alliance foundered—the questions of Naples, of Spain, her internal revolution and that of her colonies, the questions of Poland and the minor German States—would not have existed. In other words, the success of the Alliance pre-supposed the admission of the principles of nationality and of popular government. Yet these principles were everywhere denied, and inasmuch as the Alliance set out to establish the *status quo*, it found itself

brought up against the new forces that were struggling to be free, and was dissolved by them. The dissolution might not have been so rapid or so decisive if it had not been for the second difficulty, namely, the attitude of the members of the Alliance towards these principles of democracy and nationality. Tsar Alexander himself was not unsympathetic at the outset, but Alexander never knew his own mind as Metternich knew his. There was not so much in Metternich's to know, but what there was Metternich knew more thoroughly, and upon the balance the Alliance, starting with the attempt to maintain the system which it found, became more and more regarded by the people who saw freedom from afar, as the grand obstacle in their way. It was an awkward initiation for a movement of pacific idealism.

History never really repeats itself, but in our present situation there are obvious analogies with the condition of Europe in 1814, and it is possible that as the war draws to a close those analogies may become even closer. We have an alliance of four great European Powers and three small States directed against Germany. We have it animated by the sense that the German State as at present constituted is a menace to the peace of Europe, and we have, I think, a general conviction that the Allies must keep together as long as that menace is in being. Over and above this we have an ideal of permanent international co-operation, not perhaps focussed in any one ruler of the somewhat subtle and complex character of Tsar Alexander, but rather diffused among the more thoughtful men in all nations, in-

cluding, let us cheerfully admit, a minority of the German Socialists. Supposing the Allies to act together in something like the spirit which animated Alexander, what would be their position? If they are faithful to the principles with which they entered upon the war, they would not have the principle of nationality as a rock in their way. They would seek to re-settle Europe, as far as the settlement lies in their power, on principles which would everywhere tend to smooth the task of internal government so far as the tangled conditions and intricate distribution of European races admits. They are not likely to incur the charge of hostility to political freedom, nor should they be tempted into any anti-democratic bias. On the other hand, they would have the problem of Germany to deal with, the

problem of Austria, the problem of Turkey, and beyond these of all the undeveloped States of the world, the regions inhabited by people whom, under various names, Europe seeks to exploit and who are not yet definitely assigned to one sphere of influence or another—questions of a class which were already looming up in the days of the Holy Alliance, for the beginnings of the Eastern question must be numbered among the causes that made for its dissolution, but which are now larger, more intricate and more pressing.

But passing over these, I will concentrate upon the first difficulty alone: the question of the future of Germany. Much here, of course, will depend upon the event of the war, but if we judge by things as they stand at present, and we are not safe in assuming anything better than

that which we actually see, Germany can hardly be expected to play a part similar to that of France after 1815. Even in those days it is strange to note, in the diplomatic correspondence of the time, the genuineness and the depth of the fear of a revivified France. Crushed as she was to all appearance by the vast superincumbent weight of all Europe, it was nevertheless felt upon all sides that France, if she once recovered strength and regained the old impetus, would be an enemy to fear. Now, if Germany holds her position in Central Europe, which means that she has Austria in tow, she is a larger and more formidable fact relatively to the rest of the continent than France could be; and unless great political changes should take place in Germany herself, changes upon which we have no right to

count, Europe will not readily credit her with any change of heart. It is therefore, to my mind, exceedingly difficult to conceive of an alliance, made with the best will in the world, which should at the outset incorporate Germany in itself as, upon the whole and with reserves, France was incorporated in the councils of the Alliance. We can hardly imagine the other States of Europe seeking to confide any extensive powers to a common council of which the German nations should form an integral part. Much water will have to flow under the bridges to wash away all traces of the blood that has been poured forth before that could be. I cannot therefore think of the historic precedents as suggesting the feasibility of any attempt following immediately on the conclusion of peace to establish a general

alliance of Europe including the two groups that are at present at war with one another.

This brings us accordingly to the third method of approach to a European unity, which is at least abstractly possible. The Alliance left behind it the tradition of combined action for the settlement not only of actual disputes but of difficulties and problems of various kinds arising between two or more of the great Powers. In relation to the question of the future of Turkey in particular, this tendency took to itself a fairly definite shape and the name of the European Concert. The break-up of the Concert into partial alliances so far appears only as a backward step, but if we look at these alliances as groupings of European States and compare the conditions which they produce

with those of the wholly self-centred entities that previously formed the European system, we might regard the group system as something of an advance towards unity. If all Europe were arranged in two parties that habitually acted together, there would indeed, as we have had occasion to know, be opportunities for the outbreak of a very terrible strife on a very gigantic scale, but there would in general be just that kind of stability and those opportunities for interchange of ideas and settlement of problems which we get in a Parliament where there are only two parties to be reckoned with as compared with one in which parties have dissolved into little factions. Men of peace have for the most part opposed alliances as a source of danger to each component nation. But those who put peace before all other

interests might equally oppose nationality as an occasion of war ; and just as on the whole we seem to see that we have to work towards peace through nationality and not against it, so I think it is conceivable that we have to work towards the unity of Europe through the group system and not over its head. I can conceive the group of Powers, great and small, that constitute the present Entente as forming a more durable, more pacific and yet more flexible organisation, than it has been as yet, and it is worth while to consider whether a still higher unity might not arise out of such a partial and inchoate formation.

In the first place the existing Alliance will not be readily broken up. It has already stood several rough knocks, and if all one hears be true, resisted many

insidious approaches. It has been cemented by mutual sacrifice, and proofs of mutual good faith. Political unities are naught unless there is some base of feeling behind them, and the circumstances of the war have been such as to engender a real community of feeling even among the very divergent units which are co-operating for the maintenance of their liberties. Everything that makes it difficult to conceive a council of all Europe, meeting to arrange the affairs of nations and enjoying the confidence of all, tells the other way if we contemplate a gathering of the representatives of the Allied Powers acting as a standing council, not merely for the adjustment of casual disputes and differences that arise, but for the joint settlement of all manner of problems, from those of mutual defence

to those of territorial extension, in which all or any of them are interested. Difficulties are obvious, but this is not the time either for examining them in detail or for suggesting particular methods by which they might be overborne, but in its essence all that is required is a mechanism to express a sentiment that is already there rather than one for evolving a common spirit that does not exist.

The question that may be asked is whether, if we suppose such a union to be as successful as might be hoped in itself, it would lead us anywhere nearer towards the ideas of a true pacific internationalism. Would it not still be just a combination of one group animated by hostility to another ? The answer, I should say, would depend partly, of course, upon the ideals animating the league itself,

and of these—at least so far as some of its most important members are concerned—it may now, I think, be said with truth that they are pacific. But success would depend also, in part, on the attitude of neutrals, and here I would suggest that it would be the natural object of the league to attract to itself as many States as might be willing to join it. Much would depend necessarily upon the action of the rival group which I conceive as still subsisting. Here we come to something which is outside our own competence to determine, but there would at least be nothing to prevent a regenerated Germany, in which the pacific elements had gained the upper hand, from throwing in its lot with the policy of peace and voluntarily entering into union with its present enemies, just as France sought

and obtained admission to the Congress of the great Alliance. As to these things speculation is vain. Our business, as I said at the outset, is to examine the tendencies of the day, to consider what possibilities they offer, to select those that are most hopeful, and in them to try to develop what is best. If that is so, we have to start from the present grouping of Europe and advance upon it by successive stages, each of which would give us something of value even if it should lead no further. The development of the Alliance into something of the nature of a federative union would yield an organisation which, if it falls short of the federation of the world, is at least wider than the nation State. It would accustom the component nations to a broader outlook, to the duty of subjecting

their egoistic impulses to a common good, to the cultivation of the Parliamentary habit in international affairs. At the same time it would afford to each member the best security that can be found, short of a change in the hearts of men, against any renewed attempt on the part of Germany upon the liberties of Europe. These are no mean results, though they do not constitute a sufficient guarantee of permanent peace. The next step would be the adhesion of neutral nations. This would not only add to the strength of the League, but would in particular accentuate its pacific and federalistic tendencies. It would enlarge the area of friendly intercourse and the scope of authority of the common council, while it would dilute the elements of fear and hostility towards Germany, from which danger might arise

as long as the combination embraces only those who have taken part in this war. Lastly, if Germany herself should so put off her present conceptions of statecraft as to desire to enter into a league of peace, the fuller aims of internationalism might be realised. Germany would then be taking her place in a going concern. She would be entering into an established system, which would already have its traditions and understandings to give meaning and substance to its paper constitution. The framework of an international council would be in being. The national representatives would have acquired the habits of mind necessary to the success of Government by discussion and consent. Rules would have become defined by precedent and consolidated by the custom of conforming to them, for

when we are taking the League to be successful enough to make Germany desirous of joining it, we are assuming a considerable advance on all these points. Now the problem of extending such a system so as to include old enemies would, no doubt, present difficulties, but not, as I think, such hopeless difficulties as the task of building up from the foundations a federation of States embittered against one another by recent war, for successful building involves some unity of sentiment and no small degree of mutual confidence among the builders.

I would conclude then that there is a greater hope of realising the ultimate ideal of internationalism at two or three removes than at a single step, and that a pacific statesmanship would do wisely if it should seek to work through the existing Alliance

towards something of the nature of a permanent federation, and through a federation of Allies towards the ultimate ideal of a united Europe.

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